Little Cuckoos Pre-School Code of Conduct for safer practice

Updated 22nd October 2026

This policy should be read alongside the following other policies:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage July 2026
- Behaviour Management
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- SVPP Case resolution
- Confidentiality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Little Cuckoos staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' as far as safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.

The Code of Conduct will be provided to all staff –including temporary staff and volunteers on induction.

Introduction

This document provides a guide for adults working in Early Years (including staff, committee members, volunteers and visitors) about acceptable and desirable conduct to safeguard both adults and children. It refers to and complements other policies and guidance in our setting. Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children, you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times. The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989). This policy is based upon the DCSF document 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (March 2009), in which you can find useful examples of acceptable and unacceptable conduct, together with discussion of the issues raised. All adults working in the setting should know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, be familiar with the child protection policy, and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

Confidentiality

As part of their responsibilities, staff may be given highly sensitive or private information. The storing and processing of personal information about children is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Such information should be kept confidential and shared on a need-to-know basis only. Please refer to the following document for more support and guidance

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

Power and Positions of Trust

The primary motivation for legislation which addresses the abuse of positions of trust is the need to protect young people aged 16 and 17 who, despite reaching the age of consent for sexual activity are considered to be vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation, in defined circumstances.

This includes sexual activity and relationships with adults who hold a position of trust, responsibility or authority in relation to them and, as a result have a considerable amount of power and influence in their lives.

The law defines specific roles and settings where sexual activity between 16 and 17 year olds and those in positions of trust, responsibility or authority constitutes a criminal offence. Advice for anyone concerned about the possible abuse of a position of trust If you suspect that an abuse of a position of trust has occurred, is occurring or may occur you should report this to the designated safeguarding lead or the designated safeguarding representative from the Committee and make a written record of your concerns and relevant details. If you feel your concern has not been dealt with appropriately, you can make a referral to the Designated Officer whose details should be available through your local authority's Children's Social Care Department and whose duties include responding to concerns about potential breaches of positions of trust. Alternatively, you can seek advice from the Multi agency Safeguarding hub (MASH) on 0300 4560108

Out of hours: 0300 456 0100. If you consider the incident to be an emergency call 999.

Propriety and Behaviour

All of us have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in our ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. We should therefore…

We should not invite any children into our home unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and senior managers. This means that we should always get written permission for this to happen and make management aware when it might happen in the future.

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

- Gifts from a family or child may be accepted if given at an appropriate time, such as at Christmas or as a thank you token when child leaves setting. Management must be made aware of any such gifts and it will be monitored.
- The risk the giving of gifts can be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or groom a child. A gift may be given when no outcome is changed for the child because of this.
- Perceptions of favouritism or unfairness need to be considered by all members of staff and this will not be accepted.

Dress and Appearance

- Staff should wear sensible non- slip shoes (summer footwear may be permitted in severe hot weather, Managers discretion) and any uniform provided (currently Little Cuckoos does not provide a uniform)
- Staff should not wear jewellery that may be sharp or dangling.
- Long, false or natural nails are not acceptable

- Employees must ensure that their dress is appropriate for the situation in which they are working and that they present a professional image and one that reflects sensitivity to parents, children and visitor's perceptions. This may reflect their ethnicity and lifestyle but should not be provocative or cause offence to those with whom they have contact.

Communication with parents/carers (including the Use of Technology)

To ensure positive relationships with parents and members of staff to benefit the children's learning, development and sense of security. To ensure mutual respect between staff members and parents is maintained at all times.

- Communication between children, young people and adults by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries.
- This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text/WhatsApp messaging, apple watches, e-mails, digital photographs, videos, webcams, websites and blogs.
- Adults should not give their personal mobile numbers or personal e-mail addresses to children/young people or parents.
- Adults should not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role.
- Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. They should also be circumspect in their communications with children/young people to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as 'grooming' in the context of sexual, financial or emotional exploitation.
- Adults should not give their personal contact details to children/young people including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents/carers.
- Where agreed, the purpose of contact should be explicit, and access to such correspondence should be available to managers for review.
- E-mail or text communications between an adult and a child/young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based web sites. Internal e-mail systems should only be used in accordance with the agency's policy.

Little Cuckoos Pre-School has a duty of care to all children and staff that are at the pre-school, and it should be noted that at no point will abusive behaviour or conduct be deemed acceptable.

Use of Social Networking Services

- Adults should not establish or seek to establish social contact via social media/other communication technologies with children or young people.
- There will be occasions when there are social contacts between children/young people and adults, where for example the parent and adult are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, will be easily recognised and should be openly acknowledged with their

manager where there may be implications for the adult and their position within the agency setting.

- There must be awareness on the part of those working with or in contact with children/young people that some social networking contacts, especially where these are not common knowledge, can be misconstrued as being part of a grooming process. This can also apply to social networking contacts made through outside interests or through the adult's own family.
- Where a parent who has accessed the organisations services becomes a volunteer or paid employee it will be important to ensure that they are clear on the organisations expectations regarding ongoing relationships and developing professional boundaries with children and their parents who continue to access the service. As such they should also be expected to work within and apply this protocol.

Physical Contact

It is crucial that in all circumstances, we should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to our professional or agreed role and responsibilities.

Reason for contact Acceptable Contact Unacceptable Contact

Consoling and reassuring a child who is upset, possibly due to an accident or disagreement, or maybe a child struggling to separate from a parent or carer.

- Cuddling child sitting on your knee
- Occasionally when separating a child from parent or carer it is necessary to physically remove/transfer the child to a member of staff, with adult's consent.

Unacceptable

- Direct 'Kissing better'

Toileting children who still need adult support

- Lifting and supporting children on the toilet, helping them to point their 'willy' down into the toilet.
- Wiping bottoms after bowel movements. Older children will be encouraged to do this independently; toilet door will always be left open but modesty preserved
- Adults will always explain what is happening and why

NEVER touching the child's private parts, rather the adult may direct the child's hand to help themselves

Changing the clothing of a child who may have soiled themselves

- Quickly undressing and redressing child – may involve removing underwear and replacing with clean clothes.
- Cleaning soiled body parts with wet wipes

Restraining a child for their own protection or the protection of others (behaviour management)

- Holding a child across their bodies from behind, using gentle to firm pressure as necessary, until the child has calmed down sufficiently. There will always be one adult present

Unacceptable force e.g. causing reddening of the skin

Helping with dressing up clothes

- General contact with body Intimate or sustained contact with the body

Holding hands, such as reassurance, in circle games or for safety reasons

- Gentle holding hands, Sitting child on adult's knee during preschool routine e.g. sharing a story or at a child's request
- Catching a child as part of an agreed game
- Holding child around upper body e.g. assisting them on bikes and climbing equipment.

Although such games and activities may be initiated by the child, there will be occasions when it may be adult led. It is vital that any contact must be on the child's terms and with their willing participation. The adult must always be sensitive to the child's feelings and body language as they may not always communicate verbally.

Unacceptable

- Putting arm or arms around the child with unreasonable force
- Rough and Tumble play
- Piggy backs
- Tickling

Little Cuckoos Pre-school cares for children from the age of 2 years to 5 years old. During their time at pre-school, inevitably there will be occasions when the staff will need to have close physical contact with the children in their care. Indeed, we feel close physical contact is vital for young children in to help them develop into well balanced, secure, happy little individuals, ready to meet the new challenges of school and beyond. However, we are very aware of the need for clear boundaries for physical contact in order to protect everyone involved.

Staff/pupils relationships and sexual contact

Any relationship formed between an adult and a child with whom they work may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action. In particular, our attention is drawn to the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust (when a person aged 18 or over is in a 'position of trust' with a person under 18 and engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or causes or incites that child to engage in or watch sexual activity). As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of

staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour, which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Behaviour Management

All children have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others. We aim to provide clear and consistent expectations for behaviour that are developmentally appropriate depending upon the age of the child. The principles guiding management of behaviour exist within the programme for supporting personal, social and emotional development Please see our behaviour management policy for more detail.

Appropriate use of language

We must behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner at all times. For example, we must ensure we speak to others as we wish to be spoken to, treat everyone with the respect they deserve and value people's opinions.

Students or children in distress

We should use our professional judgement to comfort or reassure a child in an age- appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries. This means we should, calm and reassure the child, gain information and clarity of the situation and resolve the situation with the child or student understanding why we have dealt with the situation in the manner we have.

*We recommend the term 'willy' to be used in toileting as we assume this to be the most commonly used name amongst families.

Intimate Care/Personal Care:

First Aid and Administration of Medication

- Appropriate training will be provided before an individual takes on a role which may require

administering first aid or medication

- Health care plan will be drawn up when a child needs lifesaving medication or treatment delivered whilst at the setting
- Include permission of parents, informing parents/carers when first aid has been

administered, and recording actions.

1:1 situations

Where there is a need for us to be alone with a child, certain procedures and explicit safeguards must be in place. Set out the setting's expectations.

Home Visits / Lone working Situations –please refer to Wiltshire Council procedures:

http://thewire.wiltshire.council/hrdirect/hsloneworking/loneworkingpolicy.htm

All work with children and parents/carers should, whenever possible, be undertaken in the setting. There are however occasions where it is necessary to arrange a home- visit. Conditions for these may be to support the parent alongside a health visitors' recommendations.

Trips and outings

Risk Assessment procedures are always completed prior to a visit, trip or outing taking place with the children. Communication with parents/carers about the arrangements for collection of children is clearly made with permission for children to attend the trip being sort and consent given in writing. Usually parents/Carers attend the trip. First aid equipment will be taken and made available at all times for the children, along with the settings mobile phone and contact details for parents to be contacted in an emergency.

Transporting children

When transporting children in our care the following will be considered:

- Parents/carers permission will be sought
- staff members own vehicle will not be used
- Ratio of children/adults will also be considered, with no staff member being left unattended with a child at any time
- Ensure that all passengers wear seat belts
- In an emergency situation staff will dial 999 and alert parents of the emergency also.

Photography and Video

- Staff members are NOT permitted to use personal equipment where children are present at the setting.
- Only cameras/Ipads belonging to Little Cuckoos are permitted to be used by staff
- When a child starts at Little Cuckoos, we seek permission from parents/carers to take photos and videos whilst the child attends. Some examples of what these will be used for are website, advertising and in their learning journeys as evidence for assessment.

A refused permission photo list can be found in our registration form folder

We should be mindful when taking images that the images contain 'appropriately' dressed individuals and that the individual is aware they are in the photo.

Access to inappropriate images and internet usage

Adults should not use equipment belonging to the setting to access adult pornography. Neither should these images be brought into the workplace.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the manager/owner must be immediately informed; they will in turn alert the police and the designated officer(s) from the local authority as a matter of urgency.

Please refer to the Child Protection Policy for the allegation management procedures used by Little Cuckoos Pre-School.

Whistle Blowing

Please refer to our separate policy.

Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

- If you have any concerns about a child's welfare please write these down with precise and accurate detail, to include date and time of entry and share these with the designated safeguarding lead
- In addition, there is a separate procedure for dealing with allegations against staff please see our policy on this
- If the allegation concerns the Managers, Chair of Committee must be alerted instead.

Reference documents

- EYFS Framework Ju 2026
- KCSIE Sept 2026
- Working together to safeguard children – March 2026
- Setting policies
- SVPP website
- SVPP Mult-Agency Case resolution protocol- Sept 2026

Policy Review

The Committee/ Manager will undertake an annual review of the code of conduct and remedy any deficiencies and weakness found without delay.

Name of committee Chairperson – Arran Bennett