

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Introduction

This code of conduct applies to all staff representing Derby Forest School whether they are employed, self-employed or volunteering. We value the professionalism and individuality of our staff, and this guidance has been written with the intention of providing support to maintain the high standards of our settings.

This policy sets out our general code of conduct and staff must adhere to this, and the other policies and procedures as set out on our website at all times.

Professional standards

Staff should always behave in a professional and responsible manner when at work and when wearing our uniform. It is expected that staff should provide an example of good conduct that they wish others to follow. This includes:

- Treating children, families, colleagues and other professionals with respect and friendliness at all times.
- Carrying out duties with positivity and motivation
- Being flexible, reliable and punctual
- Being honest and trustworthy in word and deed
- Contributing and promoting an environment that is free from discrimination and is inclusive to all by following the Equal Opportunity Policy outline on our website
- Maintaining a child-centred approach and ensuring that conversations with colleagues are appropriate and do not detract from children's needs
- Undertaking duties in a competent, timely and responsible way
- Engaging in own professional development and identifying training needs in partnership with manager
- Using appropriate language; swearing is unacceptable but staff should also consider the way that they speak and may need to adapt accordingly
- Reporting any concerns about a child to a manager as soon as possible in line with the Safeguarding policy
- Taking responsibility for their own wellbeing and discussing with their manager any difficulties, concerns or support they may need
- Only performing duties which they feel competent in and asking for support / training where needed

Dress code & appearance

Where uniform is provided this must be kept clean and in good condition. Other items of clothing should be appropriate for work and fit for purpose in relation to the outdoor environment in which staff will spend most of their time; shoulders must be covered to protect from sun, long trousers are recommended to protect from stings, scratches and tick bites and clothing must not include inappropriate slogans, writing or images. Good quality waterproof clothing will be required, and sturdy footwear must be worn.

Tattoos, piercings and other methods of expressing individuality are generally acceptable but staff should consider appropriateness in relation to the ages of the children being cared for and whether they may present any kind of health and safety issue.

It is expected that staff set a good example for children by ensuring that they maintain high standards of hygiene and cleanliness when at work.

Food / drink

Food and drink may only be consumed in front of children when they are eating themselves and must comply with our healthy eating policy. Children enjoy having lunch with staff and are usually interested in what is included, our policy says that only one treat (crisps, biscuits, sweets, cake) may be included with a healthy lunch. Other snacks or fizzy drinks must be consumed out of sight of children or on breaks.

Sickness / medication

If staff are unable to attend work due to sickness, they should inform their manager as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be made and at the latest by 7am on the day of their shift. The guidelines issued by the Health Protection Agency for schools and childcare settings should be followed regarding whether staff are able to work when unwell and in the case of vomiting or diarrhoea must allow a period of 48 hours from the last episode before returning to work in accordance with government guidelines.

Staff must ensure that their manager is made aware of any health conditions from which they suffer or regular medications that they take and that any changes which may affect their ability to work are disclosed promptly. If medicines need to be kept available during working hours (eg inhalers, epipens) these must be kept out of the reach of children at all times.

Mobile phones

In line with the settings mobile phone policy staff may not carry their personal mobile phone whilst working. They must be left inside their car or in a bag in the roundhouse which they can then access whilst on breaks only. If in exceptional circumstances staff need to be contactable and therefore have access to their phone whilst on shift, they should discuss this with the manager.

Staff will be provided with a mobile phone to use for taking photographs, accessing identification apps, maintaining contact with other staff members and for use in an emergency. This should be returned to the manager at the end of the shift who will regularly check the history and photographs on the device. Staff may take phones home in exceptional circumstances to update children's online learning journey's and this will be discussed on each occasion.

Where staff take a work phone home, they will be responsible for ensuring that they remain secure and inaccessible to others.

Alcohol / drug misuse, smoking and E-cigarettes

If staff members choose to smoke on their breaks (including E-cigarettes) this must be out of sight of children. Staff are expected to cover their uniform with a coat / jacket specifically for this purpose which they will remove on returning to work. After smoking staff must wash their hands, freshen breath and allow time after finishing cigarettes for smoke to leave their body before returning to work

Staff must not work when under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs. Where these are consumed when off duty, adequate time must be left between doing so and the next shift so that they have time to leave the body.

Confidentiality

Staff must act in accordance with the confidentiality policy outlined on our website at all times. They are not permitted to discuss children or family's personal details outside of the setting and should take care not to inadvertently identify them.

Social media

Staff should not engage in conversations with children, parents or other family members on social media other than the official Derby Forest School pages. Where staff have a prior relationship with families and therefore have contact outside of work, they must make their manager aware of this and engage in a discussion about what is appropriate.

Staff must ensure that the privacy settings on their personal social media platforms are set high enough that families can't view the content or make contact but should also consider the appropriateness of the content that they post and engage in.

Staff are not permitted to discuss the setting, children or families on social media.

Vulnerable situations

As staff will be caring for very young children, they will be providing intimate care routines including nappy changing and toileting. In order to protect themselves from allegations of abuse they should apply the following guidelines:

- Adopt an "open door" policy when supporting children with toileting and nappy changing
- Ensure other staff members are within ear-shot or view where possible
- Encourage children to undertake self-care tasks independently as soon as they are able and support them in learning to do so
- Use appropriate language in relation to body parts and encourage children to do the same
- Be vigilant to signs and symptoms of abuse and follow the setting Safeguarding policy
- Maintain good communication with parents / carers in relation to children's care needs
- Ensure intimate care tasks are performed by the child's keyworker wherever possible.
- Volunteers will not undertake intimate care tasks