2.9 Staff Code of Conduct

Policy Statement

At St Christopher's Playgroup, we value and support our staff. We take the safety and welfare of our children and staff seriously. This policy ensures staff behave in an appropriate manner, act as positive role models for, and protect all children in their care.

All staff, volunteers and students are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. These adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any type of conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. Staff will work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way. We will ensure this professional standard is applied to all children and families regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

This policy is to be used as a guide for all staff, volunteers, visitors and professionals who access our setting. We have a legal responsibility to provide a comfortable, safe and happy environment for all of the children and staff, in which the rights of the child are considered at all times.

At St Christopher's Playgroup we place great value on:

- The physical and emotional wellbeing of the children; meeting individual needs of the children lies at the heart of the EYFS. We will in close partnership with parents/carers strive to deliver learning, development and care to help children get the best start in life
- Providing an open, welcoming environment where everyone's contribution is not only valued and respected but positively encouraged
- Promoting positive attitudes to diversity and difference within all children, helping them to learn and value different aspects of their own and other people's lives
- Encouraging parent/carers to support and participate in the day to day activities that we provide for the children

- Provide a safe and secure environment in which children will thrive, staff will feel supported and valued, and parents will feel their views and opinions are important

For this policy to be effective everyone concerned must take ownership and assume responsibility of it. To ensure this happens:

Management will ensure they:

- Abide by the standards of conduct as set out in this policy
- Ensure this policy is displayed at the setting and that all staff, students and volunteers are made aware of it and abide to it's terms and conditions
- Ensure that this policy is provided to staff upon acceptance of employment and that they are made aware of the serious implications of not acting within it's boundaries
- Review this policy at least once a year or as and when required

Staff will ensure they:

- Abide by the standards of conduct as set out in this policy
- Respect individual needs and value the cultural practices and beliefs of the children and families who use our services
- Work with colleagues, management and parents/carers to provide an environment that encourages positive communication and feedback

1. **Confidentiality**

Management and staff of St Christopher's Playgroup will have access to confidential information. They may also have access to or given highly sensitive or personal information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is the interests of the child to do so. If you are in any doubt as to whether to share information or keep it confidential you must seek guidance from Management or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In circumstances where staff have good reason to believe that a child is at risk, or is likely to be at risk, of child abuse or neglect the Safeguarding Policy will override confidentiality on a "need to know" basis.

Staff failing to show due regard for confidentiality will be liable to disciplinary action under the provisions of the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure policy

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, staff must treat personal and sensitive personal information as follows:

- Written records and correspondence should be kept securely at all times

- Information relating to staff, parents or children must not be disclosed either orally or in writing to unauthorised persons
- Information relaying to staff, parents or children must not be given over the telephone unless the caller has given details of their right to ask for such information. Staff should check on the caller's right to information by obtaining their telephone number and calling back to check their identity or by asking for a written request for information
- Confidential matters relating to staff, parents and children should not be discussed in areas where they maybe heard by passers-by, for example corridors
- Staff are not permitted to make statements or write letters to the media about playgroup business

2. **Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substances**

Staff must ensure that they are not unfit for work as a result of the effects of alcohol or drugs. Staff should be aware of the lasting effects of alcohol and drugs, both prescription and illegal, and ensure that any consumption of these substances does not impair their ability to carry out their duties. The following applies to all staff:

- Staff are not permitted to be under the influence of alcohol, or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children
- If staff are seen to be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance they will be escorted off the premises immediately
- If staff are on medication they must inform the Manager or Deputy Manager about what medication they are taking, the date it was issued and the date it should no longer be needed. They must fill out a form giving the information required.
- Staff will only be allowed to work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair the staff member's ability to look after children properly
- Staff medication on the premises must be stored securely, out of reach of children at all times
- Staff medication is not allowed in the room where children are present
- Staff who do not adhere to this will be in breach of the staff code of conduct and will be subject to disciplinary proceedings

3. **Dress Code**

While dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self expression, at work we should always dress in ways which are appropriate to our role at work. The clothes we wear

should be appropriate for the tasks and the work we need to undertake. Dressing in a manner which could be inappropriate could render us vulnerable to criticism or allegations.
At St Christopher's Playgroup staff are provided with a uniform, consisting of polo shirts and fleece jackets. We supply uniform regularly for employees. Smart suitable trousers must also form part of the uniform, which staff are to provide themselves. In warmer weather a reasonable length pair of shorts can be worn. Suitable footwear must be worn that enables staff to be active with the children and practical for setting up and packing away furniture each day. High heeled shoes, open toed shoes and flip flops are not considered appropriate.

4. **Policies and Procedures**

A full set of policies and procedures are in place at playgroup and these are available to all staff. Staff have a responsibility to familiarise themselves on these. Staff are asked to read and sign each policy each time they are reviewed. New staff are made aware of the important policies such as Safeguarding Children and Young People during their induction

5. **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everybody's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff should make sure their approach is child centred, which means considering what is in the best interests of the child, at all times.
All staff are required to follow the child protection procedures where they have a concern about a child or raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice by colleagues.
It is a mandatory requirement that staff attend safeguarding and child protection training. Information on our child protection procedures are discussed as part of our induction and staff renew their training every 2 years. Safeguarding updates are provided at staff meetings.

- Staff must ensure that they subscribe to the DBS update service when a new DBS is necessary and are responsible for paying to renew this each year so that Management can regularly check as part of the ongoing suitability checks.

6. **Smoking/Vaping**

Smoking or vaping is not permitted in any part of the playgroup. Staff are not permitted to smoke during their shift.

7. **Acceptable Use of Technology**

We take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of technology within the setting.

7.1 **Personal Mobile Phones**

- Personal mobile phones belonging to members of staff are to be kept secure away from the children during working hours
- Use in the kitchen, is permitted whilst on breaks, but the door must be closed
- Members of staff are encouraged to give the Playgroup telephone number to family, school etc in case of an emergency

7.2 **Cameras and Videos**

- Staff must not bring their own cameras or video recorders into Playgroup
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons eg, to record their learning and development to be uploaded to their Tapestry Learning Journal or for special Playgroup events
- Photographs and videos are only taken on Playgroup tablets assigned to the staff
- In the event of special events such as the Nativity, permission will be sought from all parents as to whether their child can be included in recordings by other parents. They agree that these are for their own personal use and will not be used on social media sites. Should any parent not give permission then staff only, will take photographs and videos, ensuring the child is not included, then upload to Tapestry.
- Photographs and videos of children will only be taken if there is written permission to do so on the child's Child Entry Records and Tapestry Permission Form.
- Staff are not permitted to take photographs or videos of children for their own personal use.

7.3 **Smart Watches**

- Smart watches must be left in the kitchen in staff bags due to possibility of camera or internet on plus distractions from notifications of calls and messages. Fitness watches are permitted.

7.4 **Social Media**

- Staff must not post anything on to social networking sites such as Facebook that could be construed to have any impact on the Playgroup's reputation or relates to our Playgroup or children attending the setting in any way. This includes:
- Staff must not post anything that could offend any other member of staff or parent using the Playgroup
- Staff should not be friends with parents on social media, unless already friends prior to them joining the playgroup.

8. **Staff Development**

We encourage all staff to actively extend their personal development, knowledge and skills through regular training. Staff have access to the Noodle Now training platform, which has lots

of courses relating to their job roles and are updated as required. Other training can be accessed via PATA and GCC should any member of staff wish to train on something else. Staff training should be undertaken regularly as part of their admin hours.

9. **Differences of Opinion**

- If a difference of opinion occurs between individual staff members, the individuals must discuss this away from the children, at an appropriate time. The discussion will take place in a respectful manner with both parties aiming to listen as much as they talk. In most cases staff should be able to resolve any difficulties with each other and reach a conclusion that is satisfactory to both parties.
- If the meeting does not resolve the situation, the matter will be referred to the Management
- The grievance procedure may be followed if it is not possible to resolve the issue after talking to Management

10. **Absences**

- If staff are unable to attend work due to illness or other medical condition, they must contact the Manager prior to the start of the working day (before 7am if possible so cover can be arranged). If the Manager is not available then the Deputy must be informed.
- Staff should indicate why they are unable to attend work and when they expect to return
- The Manager will keep records of all sick leave and other absences.

11. **Holidays**

- We strongly encourage all our staff to take holidays outside of term time. Should you require to take time off during term we always endeavour to balance the operational needs of The playgroup with your entitlement. So that we can achieve this balance and ensure that holidays are taken in a manner that is workable for the business and all your colleagues, holidays must be requested and pre- approved by The Playgroup Manager/Committee Chairperson
- If you work on an Inset Day (staff meetings, sorting cupboards etc) this will be paid as overtime

Monitoring Staff Behaviour

Within the Playgroup Management will:

- Conduct regular observations of all staff, during which we will look at interactions with children and peers
- Have regular supervision sessions with all staff in which we will help staff develop professionally, share concerns or frustrations and support them to find resolutions. In addition ongoing suitability will be monitored and recorded
- Operate a whistleblowing policy that enables team members to discuss confidentially any concerns about colleagues
- Carry out an annual appraisal with all employees, including ongoing suitability

- Ensure all new staff members are suitable with the appropriate checks as detailed in the Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Policies
- Ensure new staff are closely supervised during their induction period

Any staff behaviours that cause concern, such as sudden changes in behaviours, changes in relationships with staff/children, sickness, lateness and standards in work slipping will be investigated further by the Manager. All conversations, observations and notes on the staff member will be logged and kept confidential.

Related Policies:

1.2 Safeguarding Children and Young People
1.4 Confidentiality and Client Access to Records
1.15 Information Sharing
1.18 No Smoking and Vaping
1.23 Social Network Sites
1.24 Mobile and Smart Phones
1.25 Cameras and Photographs
1.27 Internet Use
1.28 Whistleblowing
1.29 Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
2.2. Induction of Staff, Volunteers and Managers
2.8 Safer Recruitment Policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	St Christopher's Playgroup	name of setting
Held on	September 2026	(date)
Date to be reviewed	September 2027	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	KJCookes	
Name of signatory	Karen Cookes	
Role of signatory (chair)	Playgroup Manager	