

## **Staff Behaviour and Conduct Policy**

This Code of Conduct applies at all times when performing official duties including when employees/volunteers are representing the After School, are present at work, attending training events/conferences and attending work-related social events.

The primary aim is to promote good relationships so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone learn to grow and develop. This policy supports the ethos of Holy Trinity After School in aiming to allow everyone to work together in an effective and considerate way.

Holy Trinity After School is committed to creating and maintaining an environment for children, parents, visitors and employees which is professional, child centred, safe and free from any form of unlawful or inappropriate behaviour.

All employees of Holy Trinity After School have an obligation to ensure their personal conduct and behaviour is at all times professional and lawful and does not reflect adversely on the reputation of the setting. All employees are required to perform their duties to a high standard and demonstrate impartiality and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities. Employees are to ensure there is no real or apparent conflict of interest between their private activities and their official duties.

Staff are expected to act courteously, conscientiously, reasonably and in good faith at all times having regard to their responsibilities, the interests of the setting and the welfare of the other staff and children. Confidentiality is an issue of grave importance when working within our setting.

Working with children in our setting is a privilege and carries with it many responsibilities. Staff have an obligation to the setting and to the children we care for to:

- Be present at work as required and to be absent from the workplace only with proper authorisation from the manager.
- Carry out their duties in an efficient and competent manner, and maintain high standards of performance.
- Take direction from the room leader/manager in the first instance.
- Respect the privacy of individuals within the setting and use confidential information only for the purposes in which it is intended.
- Any conversations carried out with parents about children in the setting should be between the parent and the room leader/manager. In some cases, a room assistant may be asked to pass information on to the parent/carer.
- Treat all members of staff within the setting with respect and report any misconduct to the manager.
- Dress appropriately and use appropriate language at all times in the setting.
- Do not enter into any written correspondence with parents unless authorisation has been given by the room leader/manager and all written correspondence should be checked by the room leader/manager before being sent to parents/carers.
- Ensure to have good knowledge and understanding of all policies and procedures.

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interest 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 must be above reproach. This code of conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issues of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

#### Private Meeting with Children

- Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private meetings with individual children. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential meetings must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such meetings in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure another adult is present when the meeting takes place.
- It is of the utmost importance that another adult should be present or nearby with a view of the meeting and the setting should take active measures to facilitate this.

#### Physical Contact with Children

- As a general guide staff are advised not to make unnecessary contact with the children.
- It is unrealistic, however to suggest that staff should touch a child only in an emergency. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- Staff who have to administer first-aid to a child should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
- Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the child, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been or may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted to the manager immediately.

#### Relationships and Attitudes

Staff should ensure that their relationships with children are appropriate to the age and maturity of the child, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

#### Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.