

Busy Bees Staff Behaviour Policy

(Cross reference to Child Protection Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Key Person and Partnership with Parents/Carers Policy, Supervision Policy, Learning and Development Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equality of Opportunities and Diversity Policy and Personnel Policy)

Relationships

Staff should maintain a professional relationship with the parents/carers of the children in our care. No sexual or personal relationship should be formed with parents/carers of children attending Busy Bees as this would be beyond the boundaries of a professional relationship.

Behaviour

Outside Work Busy Bees staff members who are registered with a social networking site (i.e. Facebook etc.) must never disclose any information about their work in Busy Bees. It is also important to remember that parents/carers of children attending Busy Bees Playgroup may view photographs, comments etc. that are posted on-line, which may result in a break down in our trust or their faith in Busy Bees staff to provide a high level of care to children attending the playgroup. Busy Bees staff members must at all times remember that they are an ambassador for Busy Bees Playgroup and should always be professional and confidential when dealing with parents outside of working hours. Busy Bees staff should also bear in mind how they manage their own children's behaviour when outside of the workplace as this directly influences a parent's/care's professional judgement of our care to children.

Staff Behaviour

Staff members must:

- Carry out their role with dedication and commitment
- Work with the parents and children in our care professionally and politely
- Be careful to use Busy Bees resources effectively and efficiently and minimize unnecessary cost to the charity
- Respect confidentiality at all times
- Comply with Busy Bees policies to meet Ofsted regulations
- Comply with local health and safety regulations and no smoking policy
- Arrive at work on time and be reliable.

staff must be aware that certain behaviours can lead to disciplinary or criminal proceedings and may result in dismissal.

Staff members must not:

- Use paid work time for personal activities
- Use any Busy Bees resources for unauthorised purposes
- Possess or be under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances
- Discriminate against other people on grounds of age, gender, disability, marital status, race, sexual orientation or religious belief
- Harass, victimise or bully anyone
- Remove Busy Bees property without authorisation.

Whistle Blowing

Whistle blowing is the term used for an employee raising concerns about practices and procedures in their workplace. Therefore, it is every Busy Bees staff members' duty to report any concerns of a fellow co-worker's conduct to the Manager or Chair Person. Staff members may also contact the Ofsted whistle blowing hotline directly on **0300 123 3155**

Busy Bees fully understands our responsibility under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which includes a duty to make a referral to the DBS where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been dismissed, had the person not left their employment with us first), because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm. We would also contact Ofsted with details of any significant event, which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with the children under our care. The disqualified member of staff would be required to obtain a waiver from Ofsted before they could continue their work with children.

Minor Disagreements

Minor disagreements among playgroup staff, or between staff and the Committee, can usually be resolved at the regular staff management meeting or informally by discussion. Examples of minor offences include:

- Lateness
- Discourtesy
- Minor forms of harassment or bullying that have been dealt with informally
- Use of mobile telephone at inappropriate times (all mobile telephones must remain in staff members' bags, in cupboard under the sink during working hours, and should be for emergency use only).

Gross misconduct is where a major disciplinary offence is of such a serious nature that it destroys the bond of trust between the staff member and Busy Bees Playgroup as the employer and makes any further working relationship impossible. It includes offences of:

- Theft
- Assault or threats of assault towards a colleague or child
- Inappropriate behaviour towards a colleague or child
- Serious harassment or discrimination
- Theft of Busy Bees property
- Unauthorised borrowing or possession of money or property
- Malpractice, deception, falsification of documents
- Abuse or misuse of official IT equipment
- Breach of Busy Bees policies relating to OFSTED regulations
- A Staff member's unacceptable behaviour inside or outside working hours bringing the reputation of Busy Bees Playgroup into disrepute
- Leaving the premises without gaining permission from the Manager during contracted working hours
- Culpable negligence, or failing to take reasonable care at work
- Refusing to obey a reasonable instruction and being disrespectful to senior staff
- Drunkenness, being unfit for work owing to the effects of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicating substances
- Being absent from work without notifying the playgroup, of illness or sufficient reason. This is not an exhaustive list.

Disciplinary Procedure

A more serious situation arises when a dispute cannot be resolved, or when the Committee and or Manager is dissatisfied with the conduct or activities of an employee. Any disciplinary matter will normally be dealt with using the following procedure. At every stage the employee should be given reasonable notice (5 days) that the disciplinary hearing is due to take place to give him/her the opportunity to prepare his/her case, and she/he should be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a colleague or union representative if she/he so wishes. The disciplinary panel will consist of the Playgroup Chair, manager and one nominated Committee colleagues, who should ensure that confidentiality is maintained within the panel.

Oral Warning

- The employee should be interviewed by the disciplinary panel who will explain the complaint
- The employee will be given full opportunity to state his/her case
- After careful consideration by the Management Committee, and if a warning is considered to be appropriate, the employee needs to be told:
 - What action should be taken to correct the conduct.
 - That she/he will be given reasonable time to rectify matters.
 - What training needs have been identified, with timescales for implementation.

- What mitigating circumstances have been taken into account in reaching the decision.
- That if she/he fails to improve then further action will be taken.
- That a record of the warning will be kept. - That she/he may appeal against the decision within a limited time period (5 days).

Formal Written

Warning If the employee fails to correct her/his conduct and further action is necessary, or if the original offence is considered too serious to warrant an initial oral warning:

- The employee will be interviewed and given the opportunity to state her/his case. (Reasonable time must be allowed for the employee to prepare his/her case)
- If a final warning is considered to be appropriate, this will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee

The letter will:

- Contain a clear reprimand and the reasons for it.
- Explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time is given for improvement.
- State what training needs have been identified, with timescales for implementation.
- Make clear what mitigating circumstances have been taken into account in reaching the decision.
- Warn that failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action which could result in a final written warning and, if unheeded, ultimately to dismissal with appropriate notice.
- Explain that s/he has a right to appeal against the decision.

Final Written

Warning If the employee fails to correct her/his conduct and further action is necessary, or if the original offence is considered too serious to warrant any initial warnings:

- The employee will be interviewed and given the opportunity to state her/his case. (Reasonable time must be allowed for the employee to prepare his/her case).
- If a further formal warning is considered to be appropriate, this will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee.

The letter will:

- Contain a clear reprimand and the reasons for it.
- Explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time is given for improvement.
- State what training needs have been identified, with timescales for implementation.

- Make clear what mitigating circumstances have been taken into account in reaching the decision.
- Warn that failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action which could result in dismissal.
- Explain that s/he has a right to appeal against the decision.

Dismissal

If the employee still fails to correct his/her conduct, or in a case of gross misconduct then:

- The employee will be interviewed as before.
- If the decision is to dismiss, the employee will be given notice of dismissal, stating the reasons for dismissal and giving details of the right to appeal.

Suspensions

If the circumstances appear to warrant instant dismissal, an employee may be suspended with pay while investigations are being made. These should consist of obtaining written statements from all witness to the disciplinary incident, and from the employee who is being disciplined. Obviously, these investigations should be carried out within as short a time as possible. Instant dismissal is possible only in extreme circumstances of gross misconduct. Examples of such misconduct would be:

- Theft or fraud
- Ill-treatment of children
- Assault
- Malicious damage;
- Gross carelessness which threatens the health and safety of others
- Being unfit through use of drugs or alcohol Otherwise, an employee should not be dismissed without the appropriate warnings

Appeals

At this stage of the disciplinary procedure the employee must be told she/he has the right to appeal against any disciplinary action, and that the appeal must be made in writing to the Chairperson within five days of a disciplinary interview. The appeal hearing should be heard, if possible, within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. Two or three Committee members - but not, if possible, those involved in the initial disciplinary procedures - will serve as an appeals Committee. If this is not possible, the appeal group may consist of the same people as the

original panel, and they must make every effort to hear the appeal as impartially as possible. The employee may take a colleague or trade union official to speak for her/him.

- The employee will explain why s/he is dissatisfied and may be asked questions.
- The Manager or Chair will be asked to put their point of view and may be asked questions.
- Witnesses may be heard and may be questioned by the appeals, Committee and by the employee and the Leader or Chair Person.
- The Committee will consider the matter and make known its decision. A written record of the meeting will be kept.

Grievance Procedure

If an employee is dissatisfied she/he must have the opportunity for prompt discussion with her/his immediate manager. If the grievance persists, a management panel should be set up for the purpose of further discussion, at which the employee may, if she/he wishes, be accompanied by a colleague. There must be a right of appeal, to the full Playgroup Committee. At this level also, the employee's colleague or trade union official may be present. The aim of the above procedure is to settle the grievance fairly and as near as possible to the point of origin. It is intended to be simple and rapid in operation.