**Safeguarding Children - 1.4 Staff Conduct and the community**

**Table of contents**

Policy Statement ……………………………………………………………………………......................…………….1

Confidentiality ........................................................................................................................1

Baby Sitting ............................................................................................................................3

Social Media ...........................................................................................................................4

Guidance ................................................................................................................................6

**Policy Statement**

Staff conduct reflects on Little Apples of Bramley even when staff are outside the setting and not working, whenever it is possible that their connection with the setting could be known, including on-line. Staff are expected to ensure their conduct reflects a responsible attitude to child welfare and education, safeguarding, inclusion and a respect for British values.

**Section 1 Confidentiality**

**(Consider also our records policy.)**

Staff understand that it is essential that confidential information about children and their families is not shared without parental consent.

**Confidential information**

Confidential information is ‘personal information of a private or sensitive nature’ that:

● is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source

● has been shared in a relationship where the person giving the information could reasonably expect it would not be shared with others.

Pre-school setting staff can be said to have a ‘confidential relationship’ with families. Some families share information about themselves readily and should be consulted about whether this information is confidential or not. Where third parties share information about an individual, staff need to check if that is confidential, both in terms of the subject sharing the information and the person whom the information concerns.

Information shared in the context of a pre-school setting is confidential to the setting and, in some defined circumstances, to other staff within the organisation. For example, a pre-school setting employee may discuss a family in a supervision meeting with a senior manager for the purpose of professional support, clarification and accountability regarding the organisation’s procedures.

There may be times when confidential information about a family may need to be shared with others in the organisation – for example, a case that may be reported in the press would need to be brought to the attention of the committee.

**Breaching confidentiality**

A breach of confidentiality occurs when confidential information is not authorised by the person who provided it or to whom it relates, putting said person in danger or causing them embarrassment or pain. It is not a breach of confidentiality if the information was provided on the understanding that it would be shared with a limited number of people, or where there was consent to the sharing.

**Exceptions**

Confidential information may only be shared without authorisation from the person who provided it, or to whom it relates, if it’s in the public interest – i.e. where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of doing so. The decision should never be made as an individual, but after consideration with managers, who can provide support, and sometimes ensure protection. The three critical criteria for sharing information without consent, or overriding refusal to give consent, are:

● Where there is evidence that a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.

● Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

● To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Where staff are considered to have breached confidentiality and these exclusions do not apply, the management team will consider evidence from all parties. Disciplinary action will be considered.

**Section 2 Baby Sitting**

**Policy statement**

Little Apples of Bramley recognises that where parents wish to find a trained, experienced and trusted childcare professional for baby sitting, asking a member of Little Apples staff could seem an ideal solution.

Little Apples does not prevent staff undertaking babysitting for our families. However the contents of this policy must be considered by staff members and a copy provided to the family.

Little Apples of Bramley recognises that Babysitting or similar arrangements may create a situation when the relationship between a member of staff and a child’s family has become more than purely professional, in the view of either or both parties. Anything that alters this dynamic has the potential to compromise the decisions an individual may make when assessing risks to a child and Safeguarding.

For the purposes of this policy “families” will refer to Parents, carers, guardians or other with responsibility for the child. “Member of staff” will refer to Staff, Volunteers and Committee members.

**Procedure**

Staff will divulge where they have a Babysitting arrangement or similar with parents or families of Little Apples children. This will be recorded on the child’s file.

Staff will report any Safeguarding concerns that they become aware of in the course of this arrangement in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy. Failure to follow the Safeguarding Policy will result in disciplinary action.

Staff are bound by our confidentiality Policy and will not discuss Little Apples children, families, staff or operation with families outside the setting. Failure to follow the Confidentiality Policy will result in disciplinary action.

Babysitting is a private arrangement, and the setting is not responsible for any child whilst in the care of a member of staff outside the setting and pre-school hours.

Babysitting is not subject to our insurance and staff should take independent advice on whether this is required. Families should discuss this with staff directly.

Babysitting and discussions thereof cannot interfere with working hours or staff relationship with any children or families.

Families are responsible for any suitability checking they require for babysitters and cannot rely on those checks carried out by Little Apples, which are for our own use only. They should be aware of other accompanying adults who are not staff in this regard.

Arrangements for medical emergencies, fire evacuation and other emergencies should be discussed.

Parents should sign the acceptance form accordingly if staff are authorised to collect children from the setting.

Staff should obtain detailed instructions and contact information from the families.

Members of staff and committee are bound by our Code of Conduct when it is reasonable that members of the public and families may know of their association with Little Apples, including on-line.

Staff should be aware that a complaint about their suitability to care for children in any setting may impact their suitability to be employed by Little Apples and will be dealt with in accordance with our Accusations procedure.

**Monitoring**

Babysitting will be discussed at the Little Apples of Bramley staff meeting and Supervision interviews under the Safeguarding section. This will be to help to identify any potential risk factors and assess the effectiveness and implementation of this policy.

Details will be retained for inspection by inspection authorities e.g. Ofsted.

**Complaints**

When anyone (Parent, staff member or other concerned party) has a concern, this should be dealt with through the setting’s usual complaints procedure.

**Section 3 Social Media**

**Policy statement**

Little Apples of Bramley recognises that social interaction on the internet is an important and integral part of life and, if used correctly, offers opportunities to develop community involvement with the pre-school and build business opportunities. It can also offer valuable insights and information which, when considered in context and with care, may be relevant when considering the welfare of a child.

Little Apples of Bramley recognises that social media may create a situation when the relationship between a member of staff and a child’s family has become more than purely professional, in the view of either or both parties. Anything that alters this dynamic has the potential to compromise the decisions an individual may make when assessing risks to a child and Safeguarding.

**Procedure**

Staff will divulge where they have a social media friendship or similar with parents or families of Little Apples children. (“Social Media Interaction record form”).

This record will be consulted when safeguarding a child is discussed.

Staff will report any Safeguarding concerns because of information on Social Media in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

Lead Professionals will be alerted when a parent or relative is unusually eager to develop relationships other than professional relationships with multiple members of staff, especially where this is not a natural progression of a relationship/friendship which develops in active village life.

**Acceptable use**

Members of staff and committee are bound by our Code of Conduct and confidentiality procedures and these also apply to on-line activities. Communication with learners, parents/carers and colleagues should be professional and take place via official setting communication channels e.g. work provided emails/numbers to protect both staff and learners when it relates to pre-school.

Communication should be transparent and open to scrutiny.

Staff and committee members must be aware that if they or another member of staff are targeted online, for example online bullying or harassment, they should inform their line manager.

**Monitoring**

Social media usage will be discussed at the Little Apples of Bramley staff meeting and Supervision interviews under the Safeguarding section. This will be to help recognise trends and identify any potential risk factors and assess the effectiveness and implementation of this policy.

Social Media interaction record forms will be retained for inspection by inspection authorities e.g. Ofsted.

**Complaints**

When anyone (Parent, staff member or other concerned party) has a concern, this should be dealt with through the setting’s usual complaints procedure.

**Guidance**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations-for-managers>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-guidance-for-practitioners>

*Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (DCFS 2008)*

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| **This policy was adopted byLittle Apples of Bramley** |
| **On 6th September 2021** |
| **Date to be reviewed** |
| **Signed on behalf of the management committee *J V Whatley*** |
| **Name of signatory J V Whatley** |
| **Role of signatory Manager** |