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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers at Fusion Childcare Services have a duty of care to keep children safe and protect them from physical or emotional harm. This document gives guidance of acceptable behaviour and the correct way to conduct yourself to protect both Staff and children. This Code of Conduct links to our **Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy** and more information about Code of Conduct can be found in Fusion's Employee Handbook.

All adults working at Fusion know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and are familiar with local child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children at Fusion.

All staff, volunteers and visitors at Fusion must:

- Be familiar with and work in accordance with Fusion's policies and refer/report anything that is of concern.
- Be responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
- Must work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way
- Dress code: The clothing and footwear worn should be chosen accordingly, taking into account comfort, health and safety, and practicality. Revealing or excessively tight clothing is not acceptable. Whilst on duty all staff should wear the approved Fusion sweatshirt, fleece, T-shirt, name badge at all times. Where possible bottoms should be kept to black and flat shoes worn. Management will where smart work attire.
- Discuss and/or take advice promptly from the Management of Fusion Childcare Services about any incident which could give rise to concern. This would include reporting infatuations by a child for that or another member of staff, to ensure that such situations can be handled promptly and sensitively. A record will be kept of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed.
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality.
- Be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.
- Provide a good example and a positive role model to all.
- Be aware of their position of trust but never promise complete confidentiality and explain that you need to tell someone else to help them.

- Never pass on personal and confidential information to anyone outside the setting.
- Physical contact should never be secretive or for personal gratification or of a type which may be considered indecent.
- Physical contact may need to be used to restrain, whereby the correct ‘restraining position/hold’ will be used and the incident recorded.
- Not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any child. For example, treat all children equally – never build ‘special’ relationships or confer favour on a particular child.
- Not give or receive personal details and do not give or receive (other than token) gifts (Christmas, end of term presents etc), these must be disclosed to the Manager.
- Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair, and considered manner. For example, you must ensure that you:
 - Have a respectful, appropriate, non-offensive appearance
 - Only touch children for professional reasons and ensure that when this is necessary (first aid) that it is appropriate and for the children’s wellbeing and safety another member of staff is present. You need to ask the child’s permission and explain where you are touching them “I am just going to put my hand on your back and forearm to help you up”.
 - Are not sarcastic, and do not make remarks or ‘jokes’ to children of a personal, sexual, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.
 - Do not embarrass or humiliate children
 - Do not swear at or in front of children and ensure appropriate language is used.
 - Try and defuse situations without using physical intervention
 - Do not put yourself in a vulnerable position or a secluded area of the setting- make sure other staff can see you, you are in an open space, if possible, doors are open and ensure that you are never left alone with a child, there must always be another child or staff member present.
 - Never use the children’s toilets, use the designated staff toilets. If you need to enter the children’s toilets, then you must announce your intentions of coming in and you must knock and keep the door open.

Ensure that your relationship with children remains on a professional footing. For example, you must:

- Not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people’s children
- Never transport a child in your own car, unless you have appropriate consent and insurance.
- Not contact or communicate or meet with children outside of Fusion (this includes use of email, text, other messaging systems, Social Media) and not make home visits.
- Not develop ‘personal’ or sexual relationships with children. Never discuss your own sexual preferences or sexual relationship with or in the presence of children. In particular, your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust (when a person aged 18 or over is in a ‘position of trust’ with a person under 18 and engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child or causes or incites that child to engage in or watch sexual activity).

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Staff may use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to support general work tasks, such as drafting communications or generating ideas, social media posts. However, staff must not input any confidential or personal information relating to children, families, or colleagues into AI tools.

All AI-generated content must be reviewed and checked for accuracy and appropriateness, and staff remain responsible for ensuring it reflects the setting's policies and values.

AI must not replace professional judgement, particularly in relation to safeguarding, decision-making, or matters involving children, families, or staff.

Use of AI must always comply with the setting's Confidentiality, Safeguarding, and Data Protection policies. Failure to do so may be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Children's Rights- The aim of this code is also to ensure that children and young people have the right to:

- Respect
- Information about themselves
- Be protected from harm
- Have a say in their lives
- A good start in life
- Be and feel secure

Failure to comply with the above could lead to a disciplinary procedure and ultimately dismissal.

Adopted on:	Last reviewed on:	Reviewed on:	Next review Date:
04.01.12	01.09.2025	01.04.2026	April 2027
<i>Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025): Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Suitable People: [3.13-3.18].</i>			
Signed and approved:	Fusion Childcare Services		