



Registered Charity No. 1027110

Staff Code of Conduct

Responsibility: Nursery Lead and Manager

Review Cycle: Two Yearly

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SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

At St Thomas a Becket Nursery we will work with children, parents, external and health professional agencies and the community to ensure the rights, safety and general wellbeing of children and to give them the very best start in life. The safety and welfare of the child remains paramount at all times in our decision making.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This **Code of Conduct** applies to you if you are a trustee, employee or student of St Thomas a Becket Nursery, 3 Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne, BN22 8XT, whether employed or volunteering on a permanent, temporary or casual basis. All associated personnel must follow this Code. For the purposes of this document, 'Staff' means all adult workers, paid, student or volunteer.

Deliberate breaches of the Code may be treated as a disciplinary offence for employees. As with all nursery policies and procedures, we ask that staff use their common sense and act reasonably within the conditions provided in this document.

1.2 PURPOSE

All actions concerning children must uphold the best interests of the child 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 in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enhancing experiences children gain from positive relationships with staff. More importantly, it is intended to assist staff by offering guidance on prudent conduct. Consequently, the purpose of this code of conduct for St Thomas a Becket Staff is:

- To identify boundaries and responsibilities.
- To agree communication and accountability.
- To explain what is expected of you as an employee.
- To ensure staff demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our children to do the same.
- To ensure that staff avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- To help staff understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

The Code of Conduct should also be read in conjunction with your job description, your contract of employment, grievance procedures, and disciplinary procedures, complaint procedures and all policies and procedures relevant to the Nursery.

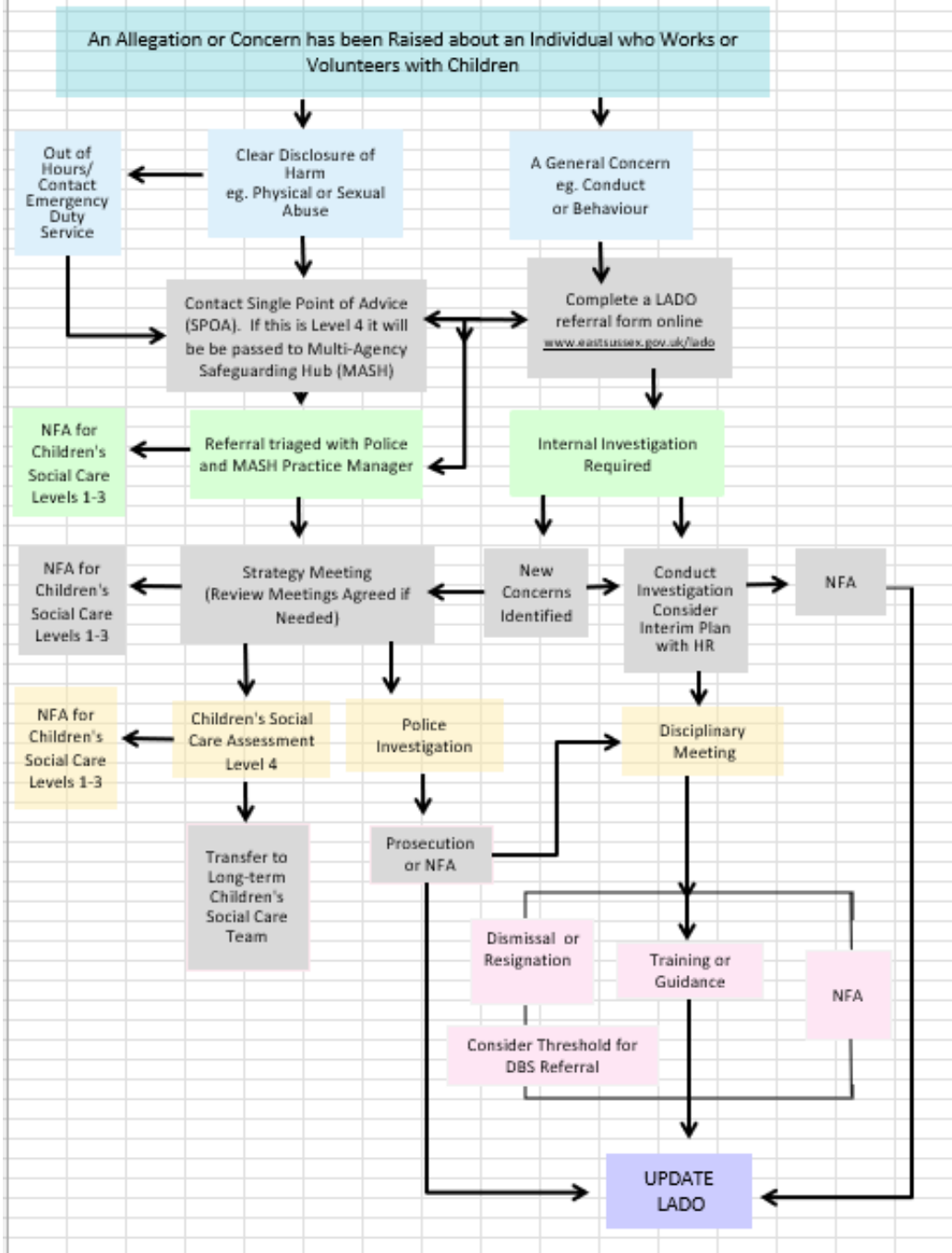
The Designated Safeguarding Lead – DSL

Staff should report any safeguarding concerns, whether this be appertaining to an adult or a child, to the setting Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is the Nursery Manager, or in her absence the Nursery Lead.

In the absence of a DSL, staff should report any safeguarding concern directly to **SPOA 01323 464 222 (the local authority Single Point of Advice)**

If a concern is specifically about an adult who works/volunteers with children, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) MUST be informed by the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), or in their absence, or if concerning the DSL, any staff member MUST report to the LADO through the SPOA number 01323 464 222

Managing allegations flowchart



1.3 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Nursery has a range of policies and procedures which apply to all staff. These are available from the office in paper form and on the St Thomas a Becket Nursery website on this page: <https://stthomasabecketnursery.co.uk/about-us/nursery-policies/>.

All staff are introduced to the nursery policies at their induction. Staff (and parents) will be emailed policies as they are updated, must read the policies and comply with their terms. The failure of any staff member to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

1.4 ATTENDANCE, TIMEKEEPING AND APPOINTMENTS

- Staff are required to comply with the rules relating to notification of absence set out in the [Contract of Employment](#) section 13.
- Staff must obtain management authorisation if for any reason they wish to arrive later or leave earlier than their agreed normal start and finish times. Persistent poor timekeeping may result in disciplinary action.
- Appointment - we appreciate that it is sometimes difficult to make medical or other important appointments at a time that is convenient for both the employee and the Nursery. In most cases the Nursery requires you to make appointments in your own time, however, in cases where this is not possible, appointments may be scheduled at the beginning or end of a shift, IF agreed with the Nursery Manager. Appointment absences will be managed on TOIL basis'.

1.5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

St Thomas a Becket Nursery endorse and support a life-long learning approach to Continued Professional Development for all. Training needs and specific areas of interest are discussed at [Termly Supervisions](#) and practitioners encouraged to fill knowledge and interest gaps.

Various training options are available, and are sought, through our Local Authority or through our whole Nursery training account with Noodle Now. However:

- The Nursery acknowledges the strengths and limitations of a childcare practitioner's expertise and practitioners should not undertake an activity in which they do not feel competent, or is outside their area of practice and knowledge.

In addition to an individuals' training interests and needs the nursery have a [Whole Team Training Plan](#):

- Mandatory training is identified and booked by the Nursery Management Team.
- Whole Nursery Team training is identified and booked by the Nursery Management Team.

The Nursery is fully committed to your development and we will advise on other training courses that might be relevant. Training is also provided at staff meetings and other in house sessions.

1.6 ALCOHOL, DRUG ABUSE, SMOKING AND E-CIGARETTES

- The consumption of alcohol on the premises is strictly forbidden. Any employee who is found consuming alcohol on the premises or is found to be intoxicated at work will be reported to the **LADO** and face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct.

Please be aware that even if you are not found to be intoxicated, coming into work suffering from the immediate after-effects of alcohol may also impair your ability to perform your role to the required standards. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct. You will also be reported to the **LADO**.

- The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes, or other substances on the nursery premises or wider school site is strictly forbidden. Any member of staff who is found to be under the influences of drugs or other substances at work will be reported to the **LADO** and will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct.
- Smoking is forbidden on the premises. Any member of staff who is found smoking on the nursery premises or wider school site will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure.
- Members of staff who wish to smoke before their shift commences or at break times, must ensure that they are not identifiable by their uniforms and are a reasonable distance from the school site.

Staff have a duty to ensure they do not smell of smoke at any time during working hours. Cigarettes, matches and lighters must be kept securely away from the children.

- Electronic Cigarettes - Although they are generally thought to be less harmful than smoking real cigarettes, electronic cigarettes still contain the addictive chemical nicotine as well as other toxic substances. Consequently, for the purposes of this Code of Conduct, the smoking of substitute cigarettes is deemed to be the same as smoking tobacco. Therefore, please observe our no smoking rules.

1.7 MEDICATION

- Staff must not be under the influence of any medication which may affect their ability to care for children. If a member of staff is prescribed medication by their doctor that may affect their ability to perform work, then this should be discussed with the Nursery Manager.
- Medication should be kept in the office or kitchen and out of the reach of children at all times.

1.8 HEALTH, SAFETY AND HYGIENE

The Nursery will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation. Through comprehensive use of risk assessments we aim to systematically remove the causes of accidents/incidents and ill health.

Staff are provided with Health and Safety information as part of their induction process.

All activities are carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of all staff, children and visitors. Staff have a responsibility to carry out tasks in accordance with training received e.g. Food Hygiene / First Aid, and to wear protective clothing provided where appropriate. (See Health and Safety Policy).

Staff should be a role model to the children in terms of their own well-being, health and hygiene, including:

- Self-Care
- Physical activity
- Hydration and appropriate food and drink items when eating with the children
- Taking an interest in those around them and respecting other's opinions, valuing diversity

1.9 MOBILE PHONES, SMART WATCHES AND CAMERAS

- Personal mobile phones are **NOT** permitted in any spaces that are accessed by children.
- It is recognised that in certain situations, that for the safety of the children and staff, it may be necessary for staff to have a mobile phone for the use of the setting e.g. on a trip to the Nursery Allotment. The use of a mobile phone must not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children and **no** photos of the children are allowed to be taken on staff personal phones.
- Personal mobile phones, smart watches or similar devices must **never** used to take photographs of children.
- Parents are informed that no phones or personal photography equipment may be used in the setting and all staff have a duty to ensure parents adhere to this policy.
- Members of staff must only use cameras provided by the setting to take photographs of children. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

(See [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) and adopted [East Sussex Online Safety Suite of Documents](#))

1.10 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Staff must not use any ICT services for copying, storing, sending or retrieving unacceptable material.

“Unacceptable material” includes any documents, messages, information, graphics or other electronic data that:

- Breach UK legislation
- Contravene the settings Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Contain offensive, pornographic or obscene language or material
- Plan, promote, incite or facilitate any illegal or terrorist activities
- Contain defamatory or slanderous language or material
- Insult or ridicule another person
- Intimidate, bully or harass another person
- Make negative comments about a colleague, including their integrity, personality, honesty, character or intelligence
- Provide or facilitate the use of computer hacking tools or virus toolkits

Staff must not use the internet, e-mail, telephone or any other form of electronic communication to transmit sensitive, subversive information, including:

- Opinions that do not reflect the policies of the Nursery.

- Information that could damage the Nursery's reputation and standing in the community (See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and adopted East Sussex Online Safety Suite of Documents)

1.11 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

- Staff must ensure that social networking sites are set as private so that only authorised persons can have access to them.
 - Only when staff are friends with a family prior to the family becoming a nursery family may they be a social media 'friend' of that staff member
 - Staff must not accept or invite any children or their families to use their private sites.
 - Staff must never contact any children or their families using their private social networking sites.
 - Staff must never upload any photos, comments or information about the setting or any persons linked with it.
- (See [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) and adopted [East Sussex Online Safety Suite of Documents](#))

1.12 SOCIAL CONTACT

All staff are expected to uphold professional boundaries. Staff have a duty to approve any planned social contact with children and their families with the Nursery Manager. Confidentiality of employment must be adhered to and respected during social contact. In summary staff should:

- Ensure all contact with existing children or their parents is of a professional and nursery related nature.
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work.
- Always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with senior colleagues.
- Advise the Nursery Manager of any social contact they have with a child or parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern.
- Understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified (parents becoming dependant)
- Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the nursery or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the nursery.
- Any criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are regarded as wholly unacceptable and any member of staff who is found to have taken part in such activities will be reported to the **LADO** and face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct.
- Staff must not undertake any other employment without the knowledge of the Nursery Lead or Manager so as to be cautious when undertaking work outside nursery, either paid or voluntary, such that it does not conflict with the interests of the nursery nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

1.13 DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE

The Nursery will provide appropriately branded T shirts and hoodies. Staff should wear comfortable black trousers. Staff should wear clothing which:

- Is comfortable, allows free movement and is appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Staff should ensure hands and nails are kept clean and long hair is tied back. Jewellery should be minimal to avoid safety implications. Any obviously visible tattoos should not be offensive.

1.14 ACCOUNTABILITY

Staff are accountable to the Nursery for undertaking those activities that are associated with the job/role. (Please refer to your job description/specification) A member of staff must inform their immediate manager if they do not feel competent to undertake any activities and must request reasonable/appropriate training.

Staff have a duty to report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern (please see the **Whistle Blowing Policy**).

A childcare practitioner has a duty to respect families by:-

- Valuing their cultural diversity, opinions and choices.
- Being non-judgmental.
- Planning contacts/appointments with the parent.
- Seeking clarification and not assuming.
- By listening and responding appropriately .
- By acknowledging her/his own limitations.
- Maintaining appropriate behaviour and activities between the family and her/himself

Staff have a responsibility to challenge any discriminatory remarks or behaviour against other staff members, visitors, children and their families and to not discriminate any member of the nursery community who has a protected characteristic. (Please refer to the **Equalities of Opportunity Policy**)

Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

1.15 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

All staff have a duty to notify the Nursery of any circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children. The Nursery Lead and Nursery Manager are responsible for ensuring all staff, including contractors, bank staff, students and volunteers, are suitable to work with children.

Checks are carried out via enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ([DBS clearance checks](#)) as well as other sources, such as employer references, identity checks and qualification checks, amongst others.

Staff have a duty to notify the Nursery of changes to personal details, change of address, telephone number, and relevant health issues.

Staff have a duty to notify the Nursery of changes to their household should this entail a new adult coming to live in their home.

Where possible new staff will have the checks completed prior to starting employment. However, if there are delays in checks coming through, as a last resort, candidates may work in the nursery before these checks are completed as long as they are supervised by registered and DBS checked staff at all times. Staff awaiting these checks will never:

- Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children.
- Take children for toilet visits.
- Change nappies.
- Be left alone in a room or outside with children.
- Administer medication.
- Administer first aid.
- Take photographs of any children.
- Look at a child's learning and development log.
- Have access to children's personal details and records.

The nursery has a expectation that all staff and Trustee will subscribe to the government's DBS Update Service within 19 DAYS of receiving their initial or revised DBS certificate. This service can be accessed online at <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure> The nursery are committed to this safeguarding practice and pay for all annual updating service fees. In the event of a staff member not being signed up to the online service, an [Annual Criminal Declaration](#) will be requested and the DBS re -applied for and update service subscribed to after 12 months of employment or no longer than 3 years following their DBS certificate renewal..

1.16 TEAM AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Staff are required to work co-operatively within teams and respect the skills, expertise and contribution of colleagues. They are expected to treat others fairly and without discrimination.

Staff must communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. As required, they must share their knowledge, skills and expertise with other team members in order to improve practice. Staff must work with other members of the team to promote a care and learning environment that is conducive to safe and ethical practice. If the care environment deteriorates, the practitioner must report this to the Nursery Manager.
(please also see the [Whistle Blowing Policy](#)).

1.17 CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff must guard against breaches of confidentiality by protecting information from improper disclosure at all times and follow all appropriate policies. (Please refer to [Data Protection Policies](#)).

Staff must only disclose information outside the immediate team if:

- It can be justified as being in the public interest (usually where disclosure is essential to protect the child or someone else from risk or significant harm).
- This is required to do so by law or by order of the court.
- There is an issue of safeguarding, and s/he must then act at all times in accordance with national and local procedures.

(Please refer to [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#))

Most staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential and needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate nursery procedure.

1.18 GIFTS AND REWARDS

Staff should not accept significant personal gifts from our customers (parents/carers), suppliers or other agencies with whom the Nursery has contact. All gifts with a perceived value of over £20 must be declared to the Managers.

1.19 BABYSITTING

If an employee offers a babysitting service then this is a private agreement between the parent and employee in which the Nursery will not be held liable.

1.20 OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS

All employees should consult the Nursery Manager before taking on additional employment.

Additional employment must not conflict with the setting's interests or impair employee's ability to carry out their role at this setting.

(Please bear in mind if you do have additional employment elsewhere, then you will need to declare which employer is the primary source of your income. This is necessary in order to avoid confusion over tax codes. You are only allowed one employer where your tax code can be used to take advantage of your personal tax-free allowance).

1.21 VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

As a key person you must discuss intimate care routines with the child's parents. The settings [Intimate Care Policy](#) (contained within the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)) must be followed at all times.

- Practitioners should always encourage the child to undertake self-care tasks independently, where developmentally appropriate.
- Ensure employees understand the extent and limitations of their role in applying basic care and hygiene tasks for minor abrasions and understand where an injury might require more experienced intervention.
- Employees must be prepared to report any actions of another individual they deem inappropriate to the Nursery Manager or the Nursery Lead who must report the concern with the [LADO](#).
- When one to one situations are unavoidable, employees must take precautions to reduce the vulnerability of both the child and the adult, for example, informing colleagues of the situation, leaving room doors open.

1.22 WHISTLEBLOWING

Whilst we expect all our colleagues, both internal and external, to be professional at all times and hold the welfare and safety of every child as their paramount objective, there may be occasions where this may not be happening.

It is vital that all team members talk through any concerns they may have with their line manager at the earliest opportunity to enable any problems to be ironed out as soon as they arise.

If, in the course of your employment, you become aware of information which you reasonably believe tends to show one or more of the following, you **MUST** use the nursery's [disclosure procedures – Whistleblowing Policy](#):

- That a criminal offence has been committed or is being committed or is likely to be committed.
- That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject (e.g. EYFS).
- That the health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be, endangered.
- That the environment, has been, is being, or is likely to be, damaged.
- That information tending to show any of the above, is being, or is likely to be, deliberately concealed.
- That you challenge discriminatory behaviour and report any incidents.

Where you reasonably believe one or more of the above circumstances listed above has occurred you should promptly disclose this to the **DSL** who is **the Nursery Manager** so that any appropriate action can be taken. If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to your manager (i.e. because it relates to your manager) you should speak to **the Nursery Lead**. If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to the Nursery Lead (i.e. because it relates to the Nursery Lead) you should speak to the Trustees and the **LADO**. **If you do not wish to speak to any of the above, you MUST speak to the Local Authority LADO 01323 464 222**

Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure. For further guidance in the use of the disclosure procedure, employees should speak in confidence to the Nursery Manager.

(Please see the Whistleblowing Policy. The Whistleblowing Policy is located within the staff toilet to ensure it's availability for all staff to access in complete confidence should the need arise)

1.22 DECLARATIONS AND CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Employees are expected to declare all convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that effect suitability.

A childcare practitioner has a duty to notify the nursery manager of any changes of circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children.

An annual DBS status check will be performed by the nursery for all staff.

1.23 PARENTS AND CARERS

- Staff must maintain a professional relationship with parents and carers at all times.
- Each member of staff must recognise that parents and carers need feedback regarding their children and that this must be given in an open, honest and friendly manner. The relationship with parents and carers must not become overly familiar such that it clouds the impartiality of your judgement and action.
- Whilst there is always the possibility of a member of staff having a close relationship with a parent or carer outside of the Nursery, we must avoid any conflict of interest or undue favouring of a child. Where such a relationship arises the member of staff should immediately inform the Managers to discuss any action to be taken.
- Where a member of staff finds that they have a prior close relationship to a child in the Nursery through such means as a family relationship or close friendship then the Manager must be made aware of this immediately and may require the member of staff to change room ends to avoid any conflict of interest or risk of undue favouring of the child.

1.24 OFSTED

OFSTED is the **Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Skills**. It reports directly to Parliament and is independent and impartial. Ofsted inspects and regulates services which care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages. All nurseries have to be registered and approved by Ofsted before they can begin to look after children.

Ofsted has 4 inspection ratings (1) outstanding (2) good (3) requires improvement (4) inadequate.

It is expected that all staff members share the nursery's belief and aspiration to uphold the highest standards at all times, such that when we are inspected by Ofsted, we can demonstrate outstanding practice.

Consequently, staff are expected to understand and contribute towards nursery self-improvement through reflective practice shared via team meetings, supervisions and everyday input into the delivery of care and children's learning, considering the following key questions:

- What we are aiming to do?
- What we are doing now? How can we do better?
- What areas of quality practice need to be maintained?
- What areas of practice need to be improved?
- How do we plan to achieve our aims in the future?

1.25 SUMMARY

It is important that staff understand the Nursery's policies, procedures and protocols. Staff are supported to continue to develop professionally. Staff must maintain client confidentiality, and act accordingly with communications. Staff have a duty of care to all parties associated with the Nursery. Failure to comply with this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action.

The Nursery will act with integrity, sensitivity and in a manner that will be deemed as reasonable in all its dealings with staff.

The Code of Conduct is deemed to have been accepted as soon as a member of staff commences employment.