



# Staff Conduct and Safer Recruitment Policy

---

## 1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how Snug Nursery Schools ensure that all adults working with children are suitable, safe, competent and professional, and that safeguarding is embedded at every stage of employment.

This policy combines expectations for staff behaviour, professional conduct and ongoing suitability with robust safer recruitment practices. It applies to all staff, volunteers, students, agency workers, contractors and leadership.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

---

## 2. Safeguarding Culture and EYFS Principles

Safeguarding is central to all practice at Snug Nursery Schools and underpins every decision relating to people and recruitment. We are committed to a culture where:

- Children's welfare is paramount
  - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
  - Professional boundaries are understood and maintained
  - Concerns and challenges are welcomed
  - Poor practice is identified and addressed early
- 

## 3. Expected Behaviour and Professional Conduct

All adults working in the setting must:

- Act as positive role models at all times
- Promote children's safety, wellbeing and dignity
- Treat children, families and colleagues with respect
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Follow safeguarding, whistleblowing and conduct procedures
- Raise concerns promptly when something does not feel right
- Act honestly, responsibly and with integrity

Unacceptable behaviour includes (but is not limited to):

- Rough handling, shouting or humiliating children

- Leaving children unsupervised
  - Unsafe or poor practice
  - Inappropriate relationships with children or families
  - Breaches of confidentiality
  - Bullying, harassment, intimidation or victimisation of colleagues, including misuse of power, exclusion, verbal abuse or inappropriate electronic communication
- 

#### **4. Safeguarding Responsibilities**

All staff have a duty to:

- Protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and online harm
- Follow safeguarding procedures without delay
- Report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Record concerns accurately, factually and promptly

Safeguarding training is mandatory at induction and refreshed at least annually.

---

#### **5. Professional Boundaries, Integrity and Conduct Outside Work**

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity, including appropriate handling of money, resources and nursery property.

Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work that could damage their own reputation, the reputation of the nursery, or public confidence in the setting. Criminal offences involving violence, sexual misconduct or illegal drugs are regarded as unacceptable.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and social media and must not post content that could bring the nursery into disrepute.

##### **Mobile Phones & Personal Devices**

To safeguard children and maintain professional boundaries:

- Personal mobile phones and smart devices must be stored securely at reception during working hours
- Personal devices must not be used within the nursery environment, including rooms, corridors, outdoor areas or toilets
- Personal devices may only be accessed within the staff room during breaks
- Personal devices must never be used to photograph, record or access information about children

Any breach of these requirements will be managed in line with safeguarding, low-level concerns or disciplinary procedures.

## Disclosure of Criminal Proceedings (Household Members)

Staff must inform the Nursery Manager or DSL of any criminal investigation, charge, caution, conviction or ongoing proceedings involving a family or household member living with them, where this may be relevant to safeguarding or suitability. Information will be handled sensitively and risk assessed in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

---

## 6. Babysitting and Private Arrangements with Families

Positive relationships with families are valued; however, professional boundaries must always be maintained.

Staff must not babysit for children attending Snug Nursery Schools outside nursery hours. This includes informal or paid arrangements. Breaches may result in disciplinary action.

### Exception – Pre-Existing Relationships

An exception may apply only where a genuine pre-existing relationship existed prior to enrolment (e.g. relative or long-standing family friend). In such cases:

- The relationship must be declared to management
- The disclosure must be recorded on the staff file
- Any private arrangements must be documented

Parents remain responsible for satisfying themselves of suitability. The nursery does not vet or endorse private arrangements and accepts no liability for them.

Any incident arising from private arrangements may impact ongoing suitability.

---

## 7. Low-Level Concerns and Whistleblowing

Low-level concerns relate to behaviour that does not meet the threshold for immediate safeguarding action but may indicate emerging risks or suitability issues. These must be recorded, reviewed and addressed promptly.

Whistleblowing enables staff to raise serious concerns in the public interest. Staff who raise concerns appropriately will not suffer detriment.

Concerns should usually be raised with the Nursery Manager. If this is not appropriate, staff may escalate to the Registered Provider or external agencies, including the LADO, Ofsted or NSPCC Whistleblowing Line.

---

## **8. Safer Recruitment Principles**

Snug Nursery Schools follow robust safer recruitment practices to deter, identify and reject unsuitable individuals. Recruitment decisions are underpinned by safeguarding principles and a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

---

## **9. Recruitment and Selection Process**

The safer recruitment process includes:

- Safeguarding statements in job advertisements
  - Application forms (CVs alone are not accepted)
  - Full employment history and explanation of gaps
  - Safeguarding-focused shortlisting and interviews
  - Safeguarding-based interview questions
- 

## **10. Pre-Employment Checks**

Employment is conditional upon satisfactory completion of:

- Identity verification
  - An enhanced DBS check (with barred list check where required)
  - DBS Update Service membership
  - Right to work checks
  - At least two references (including most recent employer) which are verified, followed up where unclear, and explored for safeguarding concerns prior to appointment
  - Qualification verification
  - A medical suitability declaration
  - Contractors are requested to provide DBS certificates and identification documents prior to starting work. Work is planned outside of nursery opening hours where possible. Children are never left unsupervised around contractors
- 

## **11. Induction, Probation and Ongoing Suitability**

All new staff complete a safeguarding-focused induction covering this policy and related safeguarding documents.

Ongoing suitability is monitored through:

- Supervision and appraisal
- Annual safeguarding and whistleblowing training
- Declarations of changes in circumstances and annual suitability declarations

- Monitoring conduct in and outside work

Staff records are maintained using an online Single Central Record where their initial suitability checks are logged and necessary documents are stored. All staff hold an enhanced DBS and are signed up to the update service. Update service checks are carried out regularly and are recorded on the SCR.

---

## **12. Allegations Against Staff**

All allegations against staff, volunteers or agency workers must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager and DSL and managed in line with LADO guidance and Ofsted notification requirements.

---

## **13. Volunteers, Students and Agency Staff**

All non-employed adults are subject to appropriate vetting and supervision. Volunteers and students are supervised at all times unless appropriate checks are in place. Agency staff must provide written confirmation of checks completed.

---

## **14. Record Keeping**

Recruitment and suitability records are accurate, secure and maintained in line with data protection requirements. A Single Central Record is maintained through an online system.

---

Policy date: March 2026

Next review: March 2027

## **Appendix 1**

### **Education Inspection Framework (EIF)**

#### **Intent – Implementation – Impact Summary**

---

##### **Intent** (*Why*)

- To ensure all adults working with children are suitable, safe and professional
  - To embed safeguarding at every stage of recruitment, induction and ongoing employment
  - To promote a culture of high expectations, professional integrity and clear boundaries
  - To identify and address suitability or conduct concerns early and robustly, in the best interests of children
- 

##### **Implementation** (*How*)

- Robust safer recruitment procedures, including safeguarding-focused adverts, interviews and pre-employment checks
  - Enhanced DBS, references, identity, qualification and right-to-work checks completed before employment
  - Clear expectations for professional behaviour, boundaries and conduct, including use of mobile phones and social media
  - Mandatory safeguarding training at induction and annually thereafter
  - Ongoing suitability monitored through supervision, appraisal, declarations and low-level concerns processes
  - Clear procedures for managing allegations, whistleblowing and escalation to external agencies where required
  - Accurate record keeping, including a Single Central Record, maintained securely
- 

##### **Impact** (*What difference it makes*)

- Children are cared for by vetted, competent and suitable adults
- Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and professional boundaries
- Leaders maintain strong oversight of recruitment, conduct and ongoing suitability
- Risks are identified early, preventing escalation into safeguarding harm
- The setting demonstrates effective safeguarding and strong leadership, meeting EYFS and Ofsted EIF expectations