



Parent and Family Code of Conduct

Reviewed: May 2026

Next Review: May 2027

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Our Values

Young Friends Kindergarten is a unique, values-led provision built around sustainability, authenticity, respectful relationships, child-led learning and emotionally secure childhoods.

Our Kindergarten operates intentionally differently from many mainstream settings. Families choose Young Friends because they actively want a childhood rooted in nature, independence, emotional wellbeing, real-life learning and sustainable practice.

Our values underpin every aspect of Kindergarten life:

- Sustainability in all areas of provision
- Respect for children, staff, families, animals and the environment
- Authenticity in communication, curriculum and relationships
- Supportive leadership with clear boundaries and high standards
- Community rooted in kindness, collaboration and trust

We believe children thrive best when the adults around them work together respectfully, honestly and consistently. This policy exists to protect that culture.

Policy Statement

This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for how parents, carers and family members engage with staff, children, other families and the wider Young Friends community.

By choosing Young Friends Kindergarten, families acknowledge and agree that our ethos, curriculum, environment and ways of working are intentionally different from many traditional settings. These approaches are not accidental or negotiable; they are central to who we are and are in place because we genuinely believe they are in the best interests of children.

Families joining Young Friends are expected to actively support, respect and uphold our ethos, policies and professional judgement.

This policy exists to:

- Protect children's emotional wellbeing and sense of safety
- Maintain respectful relationships between families and staff
- Ensure concerns are handled professionally and constructively
- Protect staff from hostility, intimidation or undermining behaviour
- Preserve the calm, collaborative culture of the Kindergarten
- Ensure decisions remain child-centred, ethical and values-led

Applicability

This policy applies to:

- Parents and legal guardians
- Grandparents and extended family members
- Authorised adults collecting children
- Any adult representing a child attending the Kindergarten
- All communication relating to the Kindergarten, including online communication and messaging groups

Understanding Our Ethos Before Joining

Young Friends Kindergarten is intentionally not the same as many other settings. Families are expected to understand and genuinely support our approach before accepting a place.

Our curriculum and environment are built around:

- Outdoor play in all weathers
- Positive risk-taking and independence
- Real tools and authentic experiences
- Nature-based learning
- Sustainable practices throughout the setting
- Child-led exploration and physical freedom
- Emotional resilience and problem-solving
- Open-ended play rather than overly structured activities
- Respectful boundaries and co-regulation
- Real-life learning rather than commercial or plastic-heavy provision

As part of this approach, children may:

- Climb, balance, build, dig and explore outdoors daily
- Use real tools with supervision
- Get muddy, wet or messy
- Experience minor bumps, scratches or bruises consistent with healthy active play and positive risk-taking
- Participate in gardening, cooking, carrying, lifting and practical tasks
- Develop resilience through challenge, exploration and independence

We maintain robust safeguarding, supervision and risk assessment procedures at all times. However, families must recognise that small accidents and minor injuries are a normal, healthy and developmentally appropriate part of active childhood and outdoor learning.

Families who fundamentally disagree with outdoor play, manageable risk, messy play, physical exploration, independence-building or child-led learning are unlikely to feel aligned with our ethos and may find another provision better suited to their expectations.

We will not support complaints that directly conflict with the values-led approach families knowingly chose when joining Young Friends Kindergarten.

Policies and Procedures

Parents and carers must:

- Read and understand all Kindergarten policies before their child starts
- Keep up to date with policy changes and updates shared through Family
- Understand that policies reflect safeguarding duties, legal requirements and the Kindergarten ethos
- Respect that staff are required to consistently implement policies and procedures
- Recognise that individual preferences cannot override safeguarding responsibilities, operational requirements or the Kindergarten ethos

Acceptance of a Kindergarten place constitutes agreement with all Kindergarten policies and procedures.

Professional Trust and Respect for Staff

Young Friends Kindergarten employs a highly dedicated team of professionals who work exceptionally hard to provide nurturing, thoughtful and meaningful care for children.

Families are expected to trust that decisions are made carefully, ethically and in the best interests of children, even where parents may not always have access to full information due to confidentiality, safeguarding or employment law.

Parents and carers must:

- Speak respectfully to all staff, children and families at all times
- Communicate calmly and constructively, even during disagreement
- Never use aggressive, intimidating, hostile, sarcastic, abusive or undermining language
- Never shout at, threaten or attempt to intimidate staff
- Avoid gossip, speculation or negative commentary about staff or Kindergarten practices
- Raise concerns directly with leadership rather than discussing them with other parents
- Respect professional boundaries with staff
- Never approach another child regarding incidents or disagreements
- Follow the Complaints Policy where concerns arise
- Understand that leaders may end conversations that become inappropriate or aggressive

We are proud of the care, effort and emotional investment our team gives to children every day. We expect this to be recognised and respected by all members of the Kindergarten community.

Parent WhatsApp Groups and Social Media

We understand that parents naturally form friendships and community relationships. However, group chats and social media discussions can quickly become harmful, inaccurate or emotionally charged when concerns are discussed publicly rather than directly with the Kindergarten.

We therefore ask families not to use WhatsApp groups, social media or private messaging groups to:

- Criticise, undermine or speculate about staff or Kindergarten practices
- Encourage complaints or collective dissatisfaction
- Spread misinformation or partial information
- Discuss confidential incidents involving children or staff
- Create hostility, division or “group complaints” within the parent community
- Escalate concerns publicly before leadership has had the opportunity to respond professionally

Most concerns can be resolved quickly, sensitively and effectively when addressed directly with management. Public discussion often damages trust, creates unnecessary anxiety and negatively impacts staff wellbeing, the Kindergarten reputation and the wider parent community.

Deliberate attempts to undermine the Kindergarten publicly or encourage hostility toward the setting may be considered a serious breach of this Code of Conduct.

Parents must never post defamatory, misleading or damaging comments about the Kindergarten, children, families or staff online or within messaging groups.

Concerns and Complaints

We welcome respectful feedback and understand that concerns may occasionally arise.

Families are encouraged to:

- Raise concerns promptly and directly with management
- Approach conversations with openness and willingness to collaborate
- Trust that concerns will be taken seriously and responded to professionally
- Recognise that outcomes may not always align with personal preference where safeguarding, ethics or operational responsibilities must take priority

We reserve the right not to entertain repeated complaints that fundamentally oppose the ethos and operational model of the Kindergarten where these have already been made clear prior to admission.

Persistent hostility, repeated unreasonable complaints, harassment of staff, attempts to destabilise the Kindergarten community or behaviour that damages staff wellbeing may result in formal action or withdrawal of a child’s place.

Fees and Financial Agreements

- Fees cover all services, experiences, resources and care agreed upon admission

- Fees are reviewed annually and may increase in line with rising operational costs
- Funding is administered in accordance with Brighton and Hove guidelines
- Late or incomplete payment may result in additional charges or withdrawal of childcare
- Families are expected to communicate proactively regarding financial difficulties

Staff Conduct Toward Families

Our team will:

- Communicate professionally, calmly and respectfully
- Listen with empathy and fairness
- Maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Treat all families warmly and without discrimination
- Provide honest and sensitive feedback about children's development and wellbeing
- Respond thoughtfully to concerns and escalate where appropriate
- Uphold the Kindergarten ethos consistently and professionally

If a Staff Member Leaves

Families will be informed appropriately when staff leave the setting and children will be supported through transitions sensitively.

Due to confidentiality, safeguarding and employment law, detailed discussions regarding staffing matters will not take place. Families are expected to respect these boundaries.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

All members of the Kindergarten community have a responsibility to report behaviour that breaches this policy.

Breaches may include:

- Aggressive or abusive behaviour
- Harassment or intimidation of staff
- Repeated undermining of the Kindergarten ethos
- Publicly damaging or defamatory comments
- Online hostility or encouragement of conflict
- Discriminatory behaviour or language
- Breaches of confidentiality
- Persistent unreasonable complaints
- Behaviour which negatively impacts staff wellbeing or the wider Kindergarten community

Where breaches occur, the Kindergarten may take action including:

- Informal discussion or mediation
- Written warnings
- Restrictions on communication methods
- Immediate involvement of senior leadership
- Withdrawal of a child's place in serious or ongoing cases

Agreement

By signing Kindergarten registration forms and accepting a place at Young Friends Kindergarten, families confirm that they:

- Understand and support the ethos of the setting
- Agree to work collaboratively and respectfully with staff
- Accept the Kindergarten's child-led, sustainable and outdoor learning approach
- Agree to uphold this Parent and Family Code of Conduct in all interactions relating to the setting

Declaration

I,

(Parent/Carer Signature) confirm that I have read and understood the Young Friends Parent and Family Code of Conduct.

Relevant Policies

- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Equalities and Inclusion Policy
- Sustainability Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Authorisation

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Young Friends Kindergarten

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