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Communications Policy	Last reviewed: Feb 2025
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Young Friends Kindergarten Communications Policy Policy Statement

- At Young Friends Kindergarten, communication is key to ensuring the safety and well-being of all staff, children, and families. This policy ensures that we uphold an ethos of respectful, clear, and consistent communication across all levels of interaction, including colleagues, children, families, and outside agencies. Good communication fosters a collaborative environment, increases productivity, and builds trust, which in turn maintains high morale for everyone involved. All team members are expected to prioritize strong communication in their daily practice, as it is vital to the effective operation of the kindergarten.

The Importance of Communication

- Effective communication is the foundation of our work at Young Friends Kindergarten and is vital for the well-being of all members of our community, including staff, children, families, and outside agencies. Strong communication enhances productivity, ensures safety, and supports strong working relationships. By maintaining clear lines of communication, we foster trust and morale among all stakeholders.
- Key Reasons for a Strong Communication Policy:
 - Team Building:** Communication is key to building effective teams, including the entire community of staff, children, and families.
 - Giving Everyone a Voice:** Ensuring that everyone feels heard is essential to their well-being and engagement.
 - Fostering Innovation:** Open communication encourages new ideas and creativity without fear of judgment.
 - Facilitating Growth:** Effective communication supports growth projects by keeping all stakeholders aligned.
 - Enabling Strong Management:** Strong communicators lead better, manage conflict effectively, and build strong relationships.

Communication with Colleagues

- Shared Responsibilities**

At Young Friends Kindergarten, we operate in an open-plan environment where responsibilities are shared among educators based on their roles. Leadership tasks are reserved for designated leadership positions, while day-to-day duties are distributed among educators at the same level. Managers assist when needed, but staff are encouraged to share tasks amongst each other first. This fosters teamwork, maintains a supportive environment, and ensures leaders focus on their designated responsibilities. Every team member's voice is valued, and we pride ourselves on maintaining a collaborative and inclusive atmosphere.
- Team Communication and Collaboration**
- Staff communicate respectfully and openly throughout the day to reflect, collaborate, and ensure smooth operations.

- Monthly reflective staff meetings are mandatory, providing time for discussions about practice, learning support plans, operational matters and anything else.
- Constructive feedback is essential for professional growth; it is mandatory for staff to welcome professional discussions and improve based on feedback whether negative or positive.
- Radios are essential tools and must be carried by staff at all times to facilitate quick and efficient communication.
- If staff notice any safety concerns, they must communicate immediately with a leader or manager to address the issue promptly.

Communication with Families

Daily Communication and Updates:

- Leaders write a daily feedback message on the whiteboard by their door around 3:30 p.m. to inform families about the day's activities. Feedback should reflect our sustainable ethos and be of high quality.
 - If a parent needs to speak with the kindergarten, they can contact management via phone or Famly. Management will address concerns and, if necessary, arrange in-person meetings.
 - Verbal feedback must be personalized and genuine, ensuring that every parent feels welcome and valued.
- ##### Famly and Learning Journeys:
- Key people provide regular updates and photos via Famly, in line with our Learning and Development Policy.
 - It is mandatory for staff to check Famly for parent or other messages at the start of their shift, and additional communication is handled by management throughout the day.
 - Messages from families are responded to promptly by management, and all relevant information is relayed via radios using children's initials only.

Respecting Family and Staff Time:

- Famly is used for formal updates and important communications. Personal opinions are not permitted; all communication must be factual and professional.
- Staff follow guidelines for using Famly only during working hours, to protect staff well-being and maintain professional boundaries.

Communication with Children

Verbal Interactions and Engagement:

- Interactions are essential for children's development. Engaging with children through activities and conversations helps build their communication skills, critical thinking, and collaboration. Staff must actively participate in conversations with children to encourage independent thinking and problem-solving.
- Staff use sustained shared thinking to engage children (e.g., starting sentences with, "I wonder what would happen if...").
- Staff must not discuss personal issues in front of children and reserve these conversations for break times.
- Behaviour management is consistent, calm, and intelligent, promoting a stable and supportive environment for children.
- Staff observe, wait, and listen (OWL) to ensure all children feel heard and valued.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; staff are vigilant and report any concerns in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Zoom Calls and Meetings:

- Parent consultations may be conducted via Zoom or face-to-face. Zoom calls must be made using the kindergarten's account and held on designated kindergarten computers or laptops.
- Zoom meetings have a 40-minute time limit unless there are exceptional circumstances. Staff should manage time effectively, giving parents a five-minute warning before the meeting ends.
- All Zoom/Teams calls must be recorded with the parent's consent. If a parent does not agree to recording, a manager must be present to witness the meeting and take notes.

Famly Newsfeed

- All important messages for the entire team must be posted on the Famly newsfeed, with staff required to like or comment to confirm they have read it.
- Messages should be posted before 9 a.m., and staff beginning their shifts should relay any relevant messages to colleagues who may have missed earlier posts.
- Part-time staff must check the Famly newsfeed at the start of every shift to stay informed and ensure continuity of care for the children.

Radios/Walkie Talkies

- Radios are used for all communication between staff throughout the day. Staff must always carry their radios and ensure they are properly maintained.
- Radios can be used to communicate accidents, request support, or relay messages.
- Staff must use children's initials when communicating via radio and avoid discussing sensitive information. Radios should be used efficiently, keeping conversations at a low level and brief to avoid disrupting interactions with children.

Contacting the Kindergarten to Inform of Sickness/Absence

- Staff should inform the kindergarten of sickness or absence by texting the office mobile and managers phone at 7:00 a.m.
- Staff should then call the nursery at 8am and speak to the office (or leader) directly to ensure the message has reached the team.
- In an emergency (e.g., hospital admission), staff may leave a message at any time. Messages will be checked first thing in the morning, and the staff member should follow up with a call to the manager.
- When at home sick staff must call the nursery at 4pm to discuss whether they will/will not, or think they will/will not be in the following day or after the weekend.

Severe Weather

- In cases of severe weather (e.g. heavy snowfall/hurricane), staff will be informed via the Social Hub. Parents will be informed via Famly.
- Staff should assume the kindergarten is open unless otherwise notified. If staff are unable to come in due to severe weather, they should notify the kindergarten at 7:30 a.m.

Nursery Landline Protocol

- The landline is primarily the office manager's responsibility. If the office manager is unavailable, staff must answer the phone. The office manager will inform the team if this is necessary. The landline must never be left either unattended or ignored.

Social Hub Guidelines

- The Social Hub is a space for team building and fostering high staff morale. Staff are encouraged to post uplifting messages and engage with one another.
- The Social Hub is also used to arrange team events. Leaders should take initiative if there is a lull in posts.
- Though social, the Social Hub is still a professional space, and offensive or demeaning content is not permitted.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are held monthly and are mandatory for all team members, taking place from 6:15 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. Minutes will be distributed after each meeting. Team members who are unable to attend must review the minutes and proactively seek clarification from a leader on any unclear points. Failure to comply with these expectations will be considered a breach of policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Email Communication

When staff are unable to work, the kindergarten will communicate with them via email and phone. Staff are not permitted to log into Famly off the premises for safeguarding reasons.

Communication with Ofsted

- Any significant changes affecting the safety of children must be reported to Ofsted within 14 days. Examples include involvement with safeguarding agencies, serious incidents involving children, or the disqualification of staff.

Communication with Outside Agencies and Organisations

- When a child starts attending another setting, parents must notify the kindergarten so that we can liaise with the other setting.
- Management or the SENDCo will lead communication with outside agencies when necessary, ensuring all communication is professional and factual.

Dynamic Risk Assessing

- Staff are expected to recognize the importance of dynamic risk assessing in maintaining safety within our environment. All communication regarding potential risks must be directed to a manager in a timely and respectful manner to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and colleagues.

Famly Platform Use

- Famly is used for formal communications and updates during working hours. Staff must not use Famly outside of these hours without permission.
- Staff must as part of their duties check Famly at the start of their shift and maintain up-to-date knowledge about the children in their care.

Applicability

- This policy applies to all children, staff, and families at Young Friends Kindergarten.

External Links and Organisations

🔗 BHISS - Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS)

[Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk>

🔗 Ofsted - Government Education and Care Regulator

Ofsted

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

Childcare: Significant Events to Notify Ofsted About

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childcare-significant-events-to-notify-ofsted-about>

🔗 Front Door for Families - Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Hub

Front Door for Families

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/front-door-families>

🔗 ACAS - Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service

[ACAS](https://www.acas.org.uk)

<https://www.acas.org.uk>

🔗 Early Years Alliance - Resources and Advice for Childcare Providers

[Early Years Alliance](https://www.eyalliance.org.uk)

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk>

🔗 Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - National Health and Safety Regulator

[HSE](https://www.hse.gov.uk)

<https://www.hse.gov.uk>

🔗 Seaside View Child Development Centre - Support for Children with Additional Needs

[Seaside View Child Development Centre](https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer/seaside-view-child-development-centre)

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer/seaside-view-child-development-centre>

Family Information Service - Childcare, Family Support, and Parenting Advice

Family Information Service

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/families/family-information-service>

Brighton & Hove City Council - Childcare and Early Years Services

Brighton & Hove City Council Early Years

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/children-and-education/early-years>

NSPCC - National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

Safeguarding Children Partnership - Local Safeguarding Resources

Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership

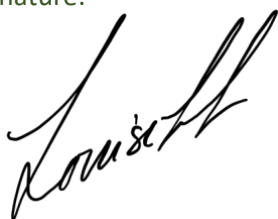
<https://www.bhscp.org.uk>

Relevant Policies and Documents

Safeguarding Children Policy
Listening To Children Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Parent/Carer Code of Conduct
Whistleblowing Policy
Two-Year-Old Progress Check Policy
Behaviour Management Policy
Learning and Development Policy
Outdoor Trips Policy
Sustainability Policy
Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Authorisation

Signature:



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