

The Learning Tree Montessori Education Centre



CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all Learning Tree employees are expected to observe. The Learning Tree employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the children at The Learning Tree. As a member of The Learning Tree community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of The Learning Tree, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of The Learning Tree. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employees' contract of employment.

1. Setting an Example

- 1.1 All staff who work at The Learning Tree set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by children. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 1.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our children to do the same.
- 1.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 1.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.
- 1.5 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all Learning Tree policies and procedures.

2. Safeguarding Children

- 2.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard children from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect
- 2.2 The duty to safeguard children includes the duty to report concerns about a child or colleague to The Learning Tree's Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy.
- 2.3 The Learning Tree's DSL is Sarah Baker and the Deputy is Louise Self.

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2.4 Staff are provided with access to copies of The Learning Tree's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.

2.5 Staff should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine children, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

2.6 Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of children, embarrassing or humiliating children, discriminating against or favouring children.

2.7 Staff must take reasonable care of children under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

3. Relationships with students

3.1 Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with children outside of The Learning Tree; this may include mutual membership of social groups or family connections. Staff should not assume that The Learning Tree is aware of any such connections. A declaration form may be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

3.2 Relationships with children must be professional at all times, physical relationships with children are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

3.3 Contact with children must be via Learning Tree authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with children.

3.4 If contacted by a child by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Proprietors immediately.

4. Child Development

4.1 Staff must comply with The Learning Tree policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of children.

4.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of children.

4.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of children.

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5. Honesty and Integrity

- 5.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of Learning Tree property and facilities.
- 5.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person.
- 5.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of The Learning Tree must be declared to the Proprietors, with the exception of “one off” token gifts from children or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to children are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action.

6. Conduct outside of Work

- 6.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of The Learning Tree or the employee’s own reputation or the reputation of other members of The Learning Tree community.
- 6.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- 6.3 Staff may undertake work outside The Learning Tree, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of The Learning Tree nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance at The Learning Tree.

7. E-Safety and Internet Use

- 7.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.
- 7.2 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, The Learning Tree, The Learning Tree community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.
- 7.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by ‘liking’ certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter children either with their own profile or acting covertly.

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7.4 Contact with children should only be made via the use of The Learning Tree email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate.

7.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of children should only be taken using Learning Tree equipment, for purposes authorised by The Learning Tree. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with The Learning Tree's procedures on Learning Tree equipment.

8. Confidentiality

8.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about children or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the child.

8.2 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a child is bullied by another child (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate procedure. It must not be discussed outside The Learning Tree, and only relevant information should be shared with each child's parent or carer.

8.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their line manager or a Proprietor any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a child. Staff must **never** promise a child that they will not act on information that they are told by the child.

9. Dress and Appearance

9.1 All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image

9.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative

9.3 Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

10. Disciplinary Action

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

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11. Compliance

All staff must complete the form in Appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

When using any form of ICT, including the Internet, at and outside The Learning Tree

For your own protection we advise that you:

- Ensure all electronic communication with children, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with The Learning Tree policies.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook and You Tube.
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole Learning Tree community or be incompatible with your professional role.
- Use Learning Tree ICT systems and resources for all Learning Tree business. This includes your Learning Tree email address and mobile phone.
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data is kept secure and used appropriately. All passwords to be changed annually.
- Only take images of students and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with Learning Tree policy.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both at and outside The Learning Tree, will not bring The Learning Tree or professional role into disrepute.
- Emails should be checked daily, as a minimum on working days or every other day if one day is particularly busy.
- You have a duty to report any e-Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or The Learning Tree.

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- Avast anti-virus is installed on all devices. It is not be altered by any other persons other than the ICT consultant.
- Take heed and caution to any warnings received from incoming emails/ attachments. If in doubt do not open.
- All obsolete hardware is removed from The Learning Tree premises and destroyed by the ICT consultant only.

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Appendix 1

Relationships with children outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of The Learning Tree are known to children outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of The Learning Tree that they may have with children.

Employee Name	Child's Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of The Learning Tree with children in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a child outside of The Learning Tree I am aware that the following must be adhered to:-

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my Learning Tree timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of The Learning Tree
- No monies come through The Learning Tree at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure The Learning Tree is aware of any relationships.

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to The Learning Tree

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Appendix 2

Confirmation of compliance

- I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with The Learning Tree's code of conduct.

- Name

- Position/Post Held.....

- Signed Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to The Learning Tree