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| **POLICY** | **DISCIPLINE** |
| **SETTING** | **OVERTON PLAYCENTRE** |
| **AIMS** | For the Play Leader and Committee to encourage a strong, committed and professional team of staff who work together well to provide quality care and education for children attending the Playcentre. |
| **Objectives, Statements and Procedures** | **PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION*** All incidents and situations will be taken seriously and investigated in a fair and consistent manner.
* If the incident cannot be resolved via informal discussion, the Play Leader will liaise with the Chairperson and the following staged process will come into force: verbal warning, written warning and final notice of dismissal.
* Throughout the processes the employee has the right to be accompanied at meetings by a friend, trade union official or other chosen support. They also have the right to appeal, at which they may be accompanied.
* If all aspects of the incident are addressed and rectified in the time scale given and this remains consistent, the record of warnings held on the Employees file will be destroyed.
* In the case of a complaint against the Play Leader, a second committee member or a professional from an outside agency will accompany the Chairperson.
* Examples of gross misconduct which compromise the safety and well being of the children and staff and which contravene Overton Playcentre policies and procedures will result in instant dismissal.

**DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE***INFORMAL DISCUSSION** To maintain harmony within the staff team and for each individual to feel valued, every effort will be made to avoid disciplinary procedures.
* In cases of minor disagreements among Overton Playcentre staff, it will be encouraged that these are resolved immediately by the Play Leader or Deputy via discussions with those concerned.
* The Play Leader will act as mediator or where this is inappropriate the Chairperson will be called on for advice and/or support.
* In the case of the Play Leader being dissatisfied with the conduct or quality of an Employee, discussions will take place and a development plan will be devised. The Chairperson will be informed.
* Further reviews will take place at a time scale set by the Play Leader depending on the issues.
* If after an agreed time scale conduct and/or working practices show no improvement and the agreed development plan is not being adhered to, then a veral waning will be issued. This will be recorded and kept on the Employee’s file in a locked cabiniet.

*VERBAL WARNING** A verbal warning will be issued where the PlayLeader and Committee are dissatisfied with the conduct or activities of an Employee of Overton Playcentre.
* The Employee will be given a date to attend a meeting.
* An interview will be held between the Play Leader, Chairperson and Employee during which the complaint will be explained to the Employee.
* The Employee will be given a full opportunity to state their case.
* If the Chairperson considers the warning to be appropriate the Employee will be informed of:
1. What action is required to correct the conduct
2. A specified time to carry out the action
3. Failure to correct the conduct within the specified time will result in further action.
4. A copy of the warning will be kept on file for 12 months
5. Right to appeal against any decisions made at the meeting.

*WRITTEN WARNING** If the Employee fails to meet the requirements set out in the verbal warning stage, a second meeting will be arranged.
* The Employee will be given a date to attend a meeting.
* The Chairperson will outline the complaint as at the verbal waning and re-iterate aspects which remain unaddressed.
* The Employee will be invited to state their case.
* If a further warning is deemed appropriate, it will explained to the Employee that a letter containing details of the complaint will be sent to them and a copy kept on their employment file for a period of 12 months.
* The letter will contain:
1. A clear reprimand and the reasons for it
2. Outline necessary action required to correct the complaint
3. A reasonable date by which the Employee is required to address the complaint fully.
4. A warning that if the complaint is not fully addressed a further disciplinary meeting will be held which could result in dismissal.
5. Inform the Employee of their right to appeal.

*FINAL WRITTEN WARNING** If the Employee fails to correct conduct outlined in the two previous stages a meeting will be called at which:
1. The Chairperson will outline the complaint.
2. The Employee will be invited to state their case
3. If the Chairperson and Play Leader are still unsatisfied with the outcome of the above procedures, a final warning will be issued detailing the content of the complaint, actions previously taken, a further developmental plan and a timescale of up to two weeks to rectify the situation.

*DISMISSAL** If the Chairperson and Play Leader is still unsatisfied with the outcome of the above procedures a decision to dismiss may be made.
* In this instance:
1. The Employee will be given notice of dismissal verbally and in writing.
2. Reasons for dismissal will be given in full.
3. The Employee will be informed of their right to appeal.

**Written warning and subsequent dismissal paperwork will be kept on staff personal file for 6 years after cessation of employment.***GROSS MISCONDUCT** Actions such as ill treatment of children, gross carelessness which jeopardises health and safety of children or adults, assault, being unfit for duty due to alcohol or drug abuse, malicious damage, theft or fraud are deemed examples of gross misconduct. This list is not conclusive or exhaustive.
* If the circumstances appear to warrant instant dismissal an Employee may be suspended with pay whilst investigations are made.
* Investigations will take 28 days and will be conducted by the Chairperson, Secretary and one other nominated Committee member.

*APPEALS** Throughout all stages of the disciplinary procedure, Employees will be given the right to appeal.
* The appeal must be made in writing within 5 days of the disciplinary interview.
* The Committee will nominate two or three members to be The Appeals Committee.
* Where possible the appeal will take place within ten days of the receipt of an appeal.
* At the appeal meeting:
1. The Employee will outline the reasons they are dissatisfied with the procedures and is invited to ask questions.
2. The Chairperson of the Appeals Committee will outline the reasons for the disciplinary action and may ask questions.
3. Witnesses may be called and questioned by either the Employee or the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee.
4. The Appeals Committee will consider and make known its decision in writing.
* A record of the above will be kept on the staff member’s personal file and kept in a locked cabinet for 6 years after cessation of employment.
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**Document History:**

**This document is approved and authorised for the application with Overton Playcentre**