**CHRIST CHURCH PLAYGROUP**

**Disciplinary and Grievance Policy for Playgroup Employees**

**Minor Disagreements**

Minor disagreements among or concerning Playgroup employees can usually be resolved at the regular staff meetings or informally by discussion. A member of the Playgroup Committee may be asked by the Playgroup Leader to attend such discussions.

**Disciplinary Procedure**

The Playgroup seeks to act fairly toward its employees and will always try to solve disputes or issues before they progress to a disciplinary stage. However in the case of a dispute that cannot be resolved or when the Playgroup Leader is continually dissatisfied with the capability or conduct of an employee, the disciplinary procedure set out in this policy will be followed.

The procedure outlined in this policy will be invoked if the employee has:

1. Committed some form of misconduct (for example, but not limited to, lateness, time-keeping, non-appropriate use of company equipment, non-compliance with Playgroup policies)

Or

1. If there is evidence over time that the employee:

- is incapable of doing their job to the required standard

- is capable, but unwilling to do their job properly

Evidence relating to (b) will be collected in the form of observations of staff at work, and also through performance reviews, where staff are regularly evaluated against objectives they have set and agreed with the Playgroup Leader. This ensures that all employees know what is expected of them to do their job properly. Feedback may also be provided by the Islington Council advisor, by Ofsted during a review, by parents, by the Playgroup Committee or by other members of staff. The employee will be offered encouragement, suggestions and support or training to make the necessary changes to their capability or conduct.

**In the case of (a) or (b) above, the following disciplinary process will be followed. Notes will be taken from all disciplinary meetings and copies given to the employee and kept on file.**

1. Oral Warning

A meeting will be arranged with one or two members of the Playgroup Committee, the Playgroup Leader and the employee, telling them the reason for the meeting and giving them the full opportunity to state their case and explain their view. It should be made clear in writing to the employee how the Playgroup expects them to behave/improve and over what time period. They will be advised that if they do not behave as expected or improve enough, or if improvement is not sustained, they will be given a Formal Written Warning.

If the matter is considered too serious to warrant an initial Oral Warning the first stage will be a Formal Written Warning (except in cases of gross misconduct as specified below). The member of staff may be asked to stay away from Playgroup on full pay until such time as this warning and the meeting at which it is given can be arranged.

1. Formal Written Warning

A second meeting with a view to issuing a formal written warning will be required if the employee’s performance or behaviour has not improved enough by the deadline and further action is necessary. The employee should be given time to prepare for the meeting (at least 5 days), be provided in advance of the meeting with any documentation or papers that are to be considered as evidence, and given a chance to explain.

A formal written warning will be issued if the Playgroup Leader and Committee member(s) are not satisfied that the employee has addressed the matter. This will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee. The letter will:

- Contain a clear reprimand and the reasons for it (specific and objective)

- Explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time is given for improvement

- State what support, including any training that the employer will provide to assist the employee

- Explain that the employee may appeal against the decision within a limited period (5 days)

1. Final Written Warning.

A third meeting will be required if the employee has still not addressed the matter within the timescale provided in the Formal Written Warning. The employee will again be given the chance to prepare for the meeting (at least 5 days) and to state their case. If a final warning is considered to be appropriate, this will be explained to the employee and a letter confirming this decision will be sent to the employee. The letter will:

- Contain a reprimand and the reasons for it (specific and objective)

- Explain what corrective action is required and what reasonable time is given for improvement

- State what support, including any training that the employer will provide to assist the employee

- Warn that failure to improve will result in further disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal

- Explain that the employee may appeal against the decision within a limited period (5 days)

1. Dismissal

If the employee still fails to correct their conduct, then the employee will be interviewed as before and if the decision is to dismiss, the employee will be given the notice of dismissal, stating the reasons for dismissal and giving details of the right to appeal against the decision within a limited time (5 days).

**Instant Dismissal**

Instant dismissal is only possible in extreme circumstances of gross misconduct. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Theft or fraud

- Ill treatment of children

- Assault

- Malicious damage

- Gross carelessness which threatens health and safety of others

- Being unfit through use drugs or alcohol

**Right To Be Accompanied**

Employees have the right to be accompanied to all disciplinary meetings mentioned above by a fellow worker, a friend, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union.

**Disciplinary Process Appeals Procedure**

At each stage of the disciplinary procedure the employee will be told that they have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action, and that the appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Playgroup Committee within five days of the disciplinary interview.

The appeal should be heard if possible within ten days of receipt of the appeal by an Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will be formed by three members of the Christ Church Parish Church Council (PCC) who have not had previous involvement in the matter as well as one or two members of the Playgroup Committee (who are not Playgroup employees).

The employee may take a friend, colleague or trade union representative to speak for them.

- The employee will explain why they are dissatisfied and may be asked questions

- The Playgroup leader and the Chair will be asked to put forward the evidence and may be asked questions

- Witnessed may be heard and may be questioned by the Appeals Committee and by the employee and Playgroup Leader

- The Appeals Committee will consider the matter and make known its decision within 10 days.

A written record of the meeting will be kept.

**Non-Attendance of disciplinary meetings**

If the employee does not turn up to a disciplinary meeting, a new date will be provided. If the employee does not turn up to the second proposed meeting, it will be held in their absence.

**Grievance Procedure**

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints that employees raise with their employer. Playgroup employees can make a formal grievance complaint if they have tried solving a problem by talking to the Playgroup Leader but are not satisfied. The Playgroup will always try to solve grievances informally first. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of normal every day working relationships.

If the grievance cannot be solved informally, the employee should write a letter to the Chair of the Playgroup Committee, setting out the details of their grievance.

A grievance meeting should then be arranged with the employee, the Chair of the Playgroup and other members of the Playgroup Committee (who are not the subject of the grievance) to discuss the issue and decide how to proceed.

The employee has the right to appeal the decision within a reasonable period of time (5 days). The appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Playgroup Committee. The appeal should be heard if possible within ten days of receipt of the appeal by an Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will be formed by three members of the Christ Church Parish Church Council (PCC) who have not had previous involvement in the matter as well as one or two members of the Playgroup Committee (who are not Playgroup employees).

The policy was adopted by the Playgroup Committee in July 2014.

Signed by JR Dallas (in folder)