



# **LIBRA School Staff Handbook**

## **May 2022**

**This handbook is reviewed annually and with mid-year updates as and when required**

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## Welcome and Introduction

We take this opportunity to welcome you to Libra. Here at Libra we aim to develop the children in our care to their full potential academically, creatively, socially, physically and emotionally in a happy, supportive, caring and disciplined environment.

This handbook contains information, rules, policies and procedures concerning your employment and should be read in conjunction with your Contract and Staff (and Visitors) Code of Conduct, which is provided to you upon appointment (copies are available in the school, on the server and in the homes). Other or revised rules, policies and procedures may be issued at any time. This handbook supercedes and replaces any previous versions previously distributed, made available or applicable to staff.

If you have any queries, you should have no hesitation in raising your matter with your Line Manager or any of the Senior Management team at LIBRA – we have an ‘open door policy’.

## Safeguarding

Your first point of contact is **Gina Dyer** our Designated Senior Person for Child Protection. Your second point of contact is **Clive Crosby** (Deputy Safeguarding Lead and DSL for Online Safety). Additional Deputies are available: **Abi Staff** for School, **Stacy Ward** for Care.

Contact in the priority order above either in person or by telephone call.

If any of the above are unavailable, you must contact the Senior Leadership Team: Kirsty Crosby, Julie Farr, Abigail Staff, Stacy Ward or the Duty Manager in order to make contact with one of the above 3 members of staff.

Any member of staff can make a referral direct to the Devon LADO if the referral involves the school or a home in Devon. Alternatively use the Somerset LADO if the referral involves a home in Somerset, similarly, contact the Cornwall LADO for children from Cornwall. The Designated Senior Person will inform the Directors of the referral.

If any staff member is involved the report is made to the Directors. The Designated Senior Persons will follow the procedures reporting the referral. The referral should be made directly to the Devon LADO - if the referral involves the school or a home in Devon or Somerset LADO - if the referral involves a home in Somerset, similarly to Cornwall if the referral relates to a child from Cornwall. Please refer to the Safeguarding Flow Charts. If the referral concerns the Principal, Directors, Senior Designated Persons or any other member of the Senior Management Team, the referral should be made directly to the Devon LADO if the referral involves the school or a home in Devon or Somerset LADO if the referral involves a home in Somerset:

Internal Safeguarding Contacts	Home	Mobile
Designated Safeguarding Lead – Gina Dyer	01643 702468	07854 865914
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Clive Crosby	01643 707666	07966 031357
Abi Morgan (2 <sup>nd</sup> Deputy School Safeguarding Lead)	01271 830898	07837 673717
Stacy Ward (2 <sup>nd</sup> Deputy Care Safeguarding Lead)	01271 866945	07557 797312
Nominated Director for Safeguarding	01643 863099	07725 628824
NSPCC Whistle-blowing Helpline	0808 800 5000	<a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>
NSPCC ‘Abuse in Education’ Helpline	0800 136 663	<a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a> <a href="https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2021/sexual-abuse-victims-schools-helpline/">https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2021/sexual-abuse-victims-schools-helpline/</a> <a href="https://stopabusetogether.campaign.gov.uk/">https://stopabusetogether.campaign.gov.uk/</a>

Director: Person to contact regarding concerns about the Principal	01643 863099	07725 628824
Childline	Help for Adults Concerned about a child: 0808 800 5000 0800 1111 / <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>	

**It is vital that you realise Safeguarding is EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY.** Refer to the Safeguarding Policy for full information.

We have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (everyone under the age of 18) as described in section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and that we have due regard to the guidance from DfE: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020)' as the safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to everyone in this school and company and we work hard to create a culture of vigilance.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is best defined as:

'protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'. (Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021)

All staff must:

- be aware of the following names:
  - Designated Safeguarding Lead – Gina Dyer
  - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead inc Online Safety – Clive Crosby
  - Second Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Stacy Ward
  - Education Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Abi Morgan
  - Nominated Director for Safeguarding - Joan Wilkes
  - Joan Wilkes (Director): Person to contact regarding concerns about the Principal
- recognise that child protection is their main responsibility and will 'always act in the best interests of the child';
- read Part One of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education';
- read Annex A of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- remember to make a written record of all verbal conversations;
- make a referral to children's social care or to the police if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm and then record the verbal conversation in writing this includes outside of school hours;
- then inform the designated safeguarding lead that a referral has been made;
- maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned';
- 'identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating';
- All members of staff and volunteers are aware of the Sexualised Behaviours Traffic Light Tool and how to use it.
- speak with the designated safeguarding lead if they are unsure and then record the verbal conversation in writing;
- contextual safeguarding: provide as much background information as possible when assisting with a pupil's social care assessment;
- provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- ensure pupils:
  - feel safe and protected;
  - know how to assess risk to themselves;
  - know how to keep themselves safe;
  - know how to raise a complaint or concern;
  - know and recognise a trusted adult that they can go to and raise their concerns;
  - feel supported and protected when they raise a concern;
  - are kept informed of any actions that have been taken when they have raised a complaint;
  - feel safe from discrimination and bullying;

- are made aware of the basic safeguarding procedures in school such as visitors signing in and wearing visitor badges.
- be aware of the online tool 'Reporting child abuse to your local council';
- be aware of Early Help;
- understand the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- be cautious when using social networking sites and must:
  - set their profile as private;
  - not allow access to pupils or parents/carers;
  - avoid publishing or allowing to be published any material/comments/images that could damage their professional reputation or bring the school into disrepute.
  - Not outside school hours make contact with pupils or parents/carers via telephone, text message, email or on social networking sites;
- not give their personal details such as mobile and home telephone numbers, home or email address;
- know that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex.
- Know that sexual violence and sexual harassment can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.
- Are aware of the importance of:
  - Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
  - Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh”, or “boys will be boys”; and
  - Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- report to the Principal any concerns they may have about another member of staff;
- report to the Chair of Directors any concerns they may have about the Principal;
- report to the SLT any concerns they may have about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices and procedures or they may contact the NSPCC whistle blowing helpline;
- where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child, working with other services as needed;
- Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk;
- In line with the Teachers’ Standards 2012 teachers (inc Principals), should safeguard children’s wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties;
- actively engage in discussion around safeguarding during monthly supervisions;
- treat children’s welfare with utmost importance;
- be aware of the background of the children in their care;
- be made aware of this policy and all other safeguarding policies and procedures during induction, in the school staff handbook and in other training;
- read and be aware of the following documents:
  - Company personnel Code of Conduct
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
  - Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy
  - Children Missing Education Policy
- be trained in identifying signs of harm and abuse;
- be aware of the effects of abuse and neglect on children;
- undertake training on responding to a child;
- know how to report any suspected case of harm or abuse;
- report to the police when a girl under the age of 18 informs them that FGM has been carried out on them or if they observe physical signs that FGM has been carried out;
- report if they suspect that FGM has been carried out or whether they consider a girl may be at risk of FGM;
- be aware they face disciplinary procedures if they fail to comply with the mandatory duty;
- respond immediately to any child;
- be clear on Libra’s policy regarding peer on peer abuse (see Safeguarding Policy);

- establish a school and classroom environment where children feel safe to talk and where school staff listen to children;
- encourage children to assess risks to themselves;
- report any concerns immediately to the designated person or the deputy designated people;
- inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any child who they suspect is being privately fostered;
- know what to do if a child makes a disclosure;
- not promise confidentiality to any child but always act in the interests of a child;
- receive support and counselling if they feel distressed from being involved with a case or incident;
- be kept up to date with changes in procedures;
- be prepared to attend a Strategy Meeting;
- be prepared to attend a Child Protection Case Conference;
- ensure that they conduct themselves correctly at all times and do not put themselves at risk;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

## Workplace Commitments

### **Equal Opportunity Statement** *refer to Policies: Equality / Safer Recruitment*

LIBRA is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in employment. Accordingly, management will ensure that recruitment, selection, training, development and promotion procedures result in no job applicant or employee receiving less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour nationality, age, ethnic or national origin, disability, trade union membership or non-membership, sex, sexual orientation or marital status, or being a part time worker. The objective is to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.

Management has the primary responsibility for successfully meeting these objectives by:

- ❖ Not discriminating in the course of employment against employees or job applicants;
- ❖ Not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination; and
- ❖ Bringing to the attention of employees that they will be subject to disciplinary action for discrimination of any kind.

Individual employees have the responsibility to ensure that they assist LIBRA in successfully achieving these objectives and can contribute by:

- ❖ Not discriminating in the course of employment against fellow employees, clients, suppliers or members of the public with whom they come into contact during the course of their duties;
- ❖ Not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination; and
- ❖ Reporting any discriminatory action to Joan Wilkes, Director

The successful achievement of these objectives necessitates a contribution from everyone and all employees have an obligation to report any act of discrimination known to them.

Employees who consider that they are a victim of unlawful discrimination may raise the issue through the Grievance Procedure.

### **Harassment and Bullying** *refer to Policies: Anti-Bullying / Anti-Cyber Bullying / Staff (and Visitors) Code of Conduct / Anti-Violence, Aggressive and Anti-Social Behaviour / Social Networks Website Usage Policy / Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment / Safeguarding.*

LIBRA recognises the right of every employee to work in an atmosphere free of harassment and to complain about it should it occur. LIBRA agrees to take appropriate steps to promote such a workplace.

It is against the principles of LIBRA for any employee to harass another employee in any way. Such conduct will not be tolerated. All employees will be expected to comply and appropriate disciplinary action, including dismissal for serious offences, will be taken against any employee who is found to have harassed a colleague.

#### What is Harassment?

There is not a single simple definition of harassment. This is because harassment can take many forms, occur on a variety of grounds and may be directed at an individual or group of individuals. Harassment may occur between people of the same sex or the opposite sex. It is not the intention of the perpetrator but the deed itself and the impact on the recipient which determines what constitutes harassment. Ultimately, the question which has to be asked is has an individual or group of individuals been treated in a detrimental way on improper grounds?

#### Forms of Harassment

Harassment may take many forms. It can range from extreme forms such as violence and bullying, to less obvious actions like ignoring an individual. Whatever the form of harassment it will be unwanted behaviour which is unwelcome and unpleasant. Forms of harassment may include:

- ❖ Unwanted and repeated physical contact including unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or brushing against another employee's body;

- ❖ Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity and/or continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome;
- ❖ Verbal and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander, letters;
- ❖ Visual display of posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, emblems;
- ❖ Isolation or non-cooperation at work, exclusion from social activities; and
- ❖ Intrusion by pestering, spying, following.

All supervisory staff are responsible for eliminating any harassment, **bullying** or intimidation of which they are aware. The problem may be resolved by immediate and firm action which will prevent escalation.

Management will:

- ❖ Take prompt action to stop harassment or **bullying** as soon as it is identified, in some cases by pointing out that the behaviour is unacceptable;
- ❖ Ensure that offensive or potentially offensive material is not displayed in the workplace;
- ❖ Make clear to staff that this kind of behaviour is not acceptable and where appropriate will be treated as a disciplinary matter; and
- ❖ Investigate all complaints made by any employee against another or others.

Procedure for dealing with alleged harassment

- ❖ Wherever possible, an employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of harassment should, in the first instance, ask the person responsible to stop the harassing behaviour as it is unacceptable to them. Person to person reproof at an early stage will often be sufficient to stop the behaviour which is causing the offence without involving third parties.
- ❖ If the recipient needs help or advice, they should seek the involvement of trusted friends. This would still be short of making the matter official by involving management.
- ❖ If the harassment continues the employee should take their complaint through the grievance procedure.
- ❖ All complaints will be handed in a timely and confidential manner. Employees shall be guaranteed a fair and impartial hearing and the matter will be investigated thoroughly.
- ❖ If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt attention and disciplinary action designed to stop the harassment immediately and prevent its recurrence will be taken. In such circumstances, if relocation proves necessary, every effort will be made to relocate the harasser and not the victim.
- ❖ Employees shall be protected from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliating against an employee for complaining about harassment is a disciplinary offence.

Whilst this procedure is designed to assist genuine victims of harassment, employees must be aware that if they raise complaints which are proven to be deliberately vexatious they themselves will become subject to disciplinary proceedings.

**Libra encourages staff to whistleblow when they see another staff member suffering from bullying or harassment.**



## Health and Safety

**Responsibilities** refer to Policies: *Health & Safety at Work / Health & Safety in Education / Working at Heights / Lone Working / Safeguarding*

All employees have the following legal responsibilities under The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

- ❖ To take reasonable care for the safety of themselves and others at work who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- ❖ To co-operate with their employer and others in fulfilling statutory responsibilities;
- ❖ To immediately notify their employer of any situation, which they have reason to believe, might present a serious and imminent danger to their own or others' safety.
- ❖ To notify their employer of any shortcomings or perceived shortcomings in their health and safety arrangements, even when no immediate danger exists, so that appropriate remedial action can be taken.
- ❖ To be aware of the following: The main first aid box is located in Reception. All company cars and the school minibuses have a first aid kit located in the vehicle. There are small emergency first kits that are to be taken with you if you are leaving the school premises on foot. There are two appointed persons that must be notified if there is an accident or emergency: Shannon Read and Natalie Smart.
- ❖ To complete any necessary reports as a result of an accident/injury – the accident book is located in the office. Please liaise with an Appointed Person if you are unsure what paperwork needs to be completed.
- ❖ To complete any necessary report as a result of a near miss.
- ❖ To record head injuries in further detail and advise parent/carer, and send a concussion protocol letter home with the young person. Please liaise with an Appointed Person for guidance.

The Company requires all employees to fulfil the legal responsibilities set out above by co-operating in all matters concerning health and safety by:

- ❖ Adhering to the Company's arrangements and procedures for fire and other preventive and protective measures put in place to control and manage risks to the health and safety of employees, young people and visitors.
- ❖ Reporting any accident, incident of verbal or physical abuse, near miss or equipment damage immediately to their line manager or Head of Health and Safety so that the appropriate remedial action may be taken;
- ❖ Notifying their line manager, Director or Head of Health and Safety if they experience ill health that they have reason to suspect may be work-related.
- ❖ Carrying out, as appropriate, regular visual checks of equipment before use, to identify any obvious defects such as worn leads or cables, damaged covers/guards or plug tops\*. After taking any remedial steps they themselves can safely take, employees should report any defect in equipment etc to their line manager, Director or Head of Health and Safety, who will be responsible for taking the necessary steps to ensure that the equipment is removed and/or repaired;
- ❖ Using any equipment or items provided for work correctly and in accordance with manufacturers/suppliers' instructions and any training received;
- ❖ Treating fellow colleagues and other persons with whom they interact during the course of their work with consideration and respect. It is important that employees appreciate that their own actions and performance could be the source of stress to their colleagues.
- ❖ Staff must not undertake any work on electrical equipment or installations, including resetting trip fuses, without receiving sufficient training. The Building and Estates Manager will arrange for fixed electrical installations to be tested every three years. All installations will conform to the requirements of the latest edition of the Institution of Electrical Engineers' Regulations for Electrical Installations, and all work must be carried out in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations.
- ❖ Electrical socket outlets must not be overloaded, and where it is necessary to use extension leads, these should be the fused and switched type to prevent overloading.
- ❖ The electrical equipment must be suitable for the environment in which it is to be used. Only portable or low voltage equipment should be used in outside areas. The Maintenance Team will

arrange for portable electrical appliances used at the company's sites to be tested at appropriate intervals.

The company recommends that staff have the Hepatitis B injections as a safeguard precaution against biting etc and this is covered during induction training sessions and through supervision.

**Accidents at Work** *also refer to the Accidents and Emergencies Policy / RIDDOR*

All accidents, incidents and work-related ill-health must be recorded in the Accident Book located on the premises where the accident occurred, school premises or children's home (found in the administration offices and at the registered homes) a copy must be sent to the Administration office for perusal by the relevant Line Manager and actioned accordingly. Accidents include:

- ❖ Accidents to staff, including minor injuries
- ❖ Accidents involving third parties, i.e. non-employees, young people, visitors, contractors etc
- ❖ Incidents where no one is injured but there is a potential for injury
- ❖ Physical assaults or verbal abuse
- ❖ Dangerous occurrences such as fires, gas leaks or explosions, chemical spillages, damage to asbestos materials resulting in any person being exposed to asbestos fibres, failure or collapse of lifting equipment such as hoists, etc
- ❖ Work-related ill-health such as dermatitis from use of chemicals, occupational asthma, musculoskeletal pain as a result of using computers or manual handling etc

The Company is obliged to notify the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (RIDDOR) of certain types of incidents. In order for the Company to comply with this requirement, the Heads of Health and Safety must be notified immediately by telephone (01598 740044) or by email: [admin@libraschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@libraschool.co.uk) of the following:

- a. Any incident that results in a serious injury to an employee. This includes:
  - ❖ a break or fracture of any bone except those of the fingers or toes;
  - ❖ any amputation;
  - ❖ dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine;
  - ❖ loss of sight (whether temporary or permanent);
  - ❖ chemical or hot metal burn to the eye or any penetrating injury to the eye;
  - ❖ an injury resulting from electric shock or electrical burns;
  - ❖ an injury that leads to a loss of consciousness or requires resuscitation; and
  - ❖ an injury that requires the injured employee to be hospitalised for more than 24 hours.
- b. Any accident or incident connected with or arising out of work activity that results in a 'third party', i.e. someone who is not a LIBRA employee, being taken from the scene of the accident to hospital. This is regardless whether or not they are admitted into hospital, or the method for getting to the hospital.
- c. Any dangerous occurrence
- d. Specified diseases associated with certain work activities, or exposure to certain substances.

If you are in any doubt about what should be reported contact Gina Wilkes, Head of Health and Safety.

**Risk Assessments** *refer to the Risk Assessment / Risk Management*

The use of risk assessments is an essential part of the work at the Libra School for all roles. All staff MUST ensure that they regularly read the risk assessments of all the young people contained in the IEP documents and also regularly read the Behaviour Support documents in the childrens' homes and which are copied to all staff by email. Up to date knowledge of these documents is essential for the safety of all staff and young people.

The company also has comprehensive files of risk assessments for all day to day activities which are held in every children's home office and in the school admin office / classrooms. All staff are required to ensure that they familiarise themselves with this file to ensure that they conduct themselves safely.

School trips and off site activities are accompanied by a detailed Educational Trip pack which contains full risk assessments and emergency plans. Prior to attending a trip all staff must ensure they read this document to familiarise themselves with the procedures in place. This pack is available in the home offices and in the school admin office.

#### **Security** *refer to the School Security Policy*

At all times staff must ensure that there is security procedures in place at all company premises. This applies to:

- ❖ Keys – office doors should always be kept locked. Filing cabinets and safes when not in direct use should never have keys left in locks. Young people should never have access to keys. Please do not have a young person in the office and leave keys hanging in the door, or on the desk or in any accessible place.
- ❖ Security of homes when they are empty. Homes should always be locked and it should be impossible for a young person to access the home without a member of staff.
- ❖ Cars. We have had a number of incidents when a young person has managed to lock themselves into a company car and the staff out! Please think security at all times and do not place yourselves in a situation where this can happen.
- ❖ Knives and sharp instruments. All Children's Homes have risk assessment and arrangements in place. Please respond to these and to any instructions given by the Manager.

#### **Staff Emergency Procedures** *refer to Adverse Weather Procedures*

Occasionally bad winter weather can result in RCCO staff being unable to arrive on shift on time, this can also be the case due to staff sickness or general lateness. RCCO staff who are on shift **MUST NOT** leave the home or young people under their care until the Duty Manager has been able to put in place an alternative plan. This could involve an additional shift. Staff who leave the home or their young people unattended and cared for will face disciplinary procedures.

Occasional emergency closure of the school is sometimes necessary, most commonly when roads are affected by snow. During these occasions staff are still required to do their best to attend their place of work, without putting themselves in danger. It is often possible, for example, to attend later in the day when the morning snow has melted.

If you are unable to get into work, you should telephone your Manager at the earliest possible opportunity to explain the situation and agree what to do. You should continue to monitor the weather conditions during the day to see if you can attend work later, for example the afternoon.

If you and your Manager have agreed to work at an alternative base, you should report there and inform your Manager upon arrival. If the school is open and staff do not attend this could result in the hours involved being deducted from salary payments. Adverse Weather Procedures and Protocol are available on the staff server / staff information.

#### **Fire Procedures and Drills** *refer to the Fire Safety Policy / Fire Action Plan / School Emergency Lockdown*

As an employer we ensure we have good procedures for dealing with fire and emergency lockdown procedures, and employees are aware and are fully trained in these. The procedures are regularly practised, evaluated and revised as necessary. We also spot check staff knowledge on emergency lockdown procedures eg location, what constitutes a full lockdown.

Fire Safety Instruction notices are displayed clearly at critical points, preferably close to exits, giving guidance on what to do in case of fire.

Within the school we have appointed specific people to act as fire wardens for specific areas. They are given the responsibility for checking that everyone has been evacuated and reporting to the senior member of staff present at the fire assembly point. They receive extra training to carry out their duties.

Regular fire drills are carried out on all premises to confirm that facilities and procedures are effective and that everyone understands what they should do in the case of evacuation. Remedial action is taken if evacuation has been slow or incomplete. The frequency of the fire drills are determined as part of the fire risk assessment. As a minimum there are 4 fire drills in each home (one of these taking place at night). Within the school there are 2 fire drills per term (these are drills that staff are not aware of happening ).

The presence of persons with special needs are specifically covered by the fire risk assessment.

### ***Fire Hazards***

Some of the young people have been known to leave their hair straighteners plugged in and left lying on the floor in the homes. Clearly this is a fire hazard and must be stopped immediately – please be aware of this situation and keep it in mind when the young people are using them. All hair straighteners should be kept in the office and issued on request and stored away in the safe after use (when they are cool).

Some of the young people are leaving cosmetics/beauty products on their radiators as well as using them for drying clothing. Please make sure this does not occur and remove any items immediately.

- Do not block fire exits
- Do not cover or block fire extinguishers.
- Do not leave items such as clothing on hobs.

## Policies and Procedures

### Policies, Procedures and Priority List

The main Policies and Procedures are in every home - in the office, please liaise with your Manager or the school office if you need a policy urgently.

Hard copies of all Policies can be found in the main school administration office. There are additional 'priority' policies on the staff noticeboard as well as the reception Safeguarding noticeboard. If you require an electronic copy of any of the policies, these can be found on the school server: staff / staff information / policies and procedures. Alternatively, email [juliefarr@libraschool.co.uk](mailto:juliefarr@libraschool.co.uk) to ensure you receive the most up to date version (as they are often being worked on with new legislation updates).

Your induction will include you being made aware of this document and it is your responsibility to ensure that you read and understand the contents of this document in the first week of your employment.

The company Policies that particularly affect staff and which should be read as a priority are:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ✓ <b>Anti-Bullying (and Cyber-Bullying)</b>           | ✓ <b>Lone Working and Vulnerability</b>            |
| ✓ <b>CCTV Policy and Surveillance</b>                 | ✓ <b>Relational</b>                                |
| ✓ <b>Complaints</b>                                   | ✓ <b>Managing a Crisis and Safety Intervention</b> |
| ✓ <b>Data Usage</b>                                   | ✓ <b>Safeguarding</b>                              |
| ✓ <b>Disclosure and Barring Service Checks Policy</b> | ✓ <b>Safer Recruitment</b>                         |
| ✓ <b>E Safety</b>                                     | ✓ <b>Social Media</b>                              |
| ✓ <b>Extremism, Radicalisation inc Prevent Duty</b>   | ✓ <b>Staff and Visitors Code of Conduct</b>        |
| ✓ <b>First Aid</b>                                    | ✓ <b>Staff Training</b>                            |
| ✓ <b>Health and Safety</b>                            | ✓ <b>Whistleblowing</b>                            |

The Policies and Procedures should also to be used as reference documents in the event that you require clarification in any element of your role. You have been given copies of Health and Safety documentation as well as the Libra School Child Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Policy.

### **Computer Users' Procedure** *also refer to Policies: ICT and Internet Acceptable Use / E Safety*

#### **Email**

The use of the email system within LIBRA is a necessity, as its appropriate use facilitates communication and improves efficiency. Used correctly, it is a facility that is of assistance to many employees. However its inappropriate use causes many problems ranging from minor distractions to legal claims against LIBRA. This section sets out LIBRA's view on the correct use of the email system, and explains how this can be achieved, as well as LIBRA's responses to inappropriate use. When working offsite, only use Office365 to download emails, no other software.

#### **Monitoring**

LIBRA reserves the absolute right to monitor employees' use of email.

#### **Authorised use**

The email system is available for communication on matters directly concerned with the business of LIBRA. Employees using the email system should give particular attention to the following:

- ❖ The standard of presentation: the style and content of an email message must be consistent with the standards that LIBRA expects from written communications;
- ❖ The extent of circulation: email messages should only be sent to those employees for whom they are particularly relevant;
- ❖ The appropriateness of email: email should not be used as a substitute for face to face communication; "Flame-mails" (emails that are abusive) can be a source of stress and can damage working relationships, while hasty messages, sent without proper consideration, can cause unnecessary misunderstandings;
- ❖ The visibility of email: if the message is confidential, the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality;

- ❖ LIBRA will be liable for any defamatory information circulated either within LIBRA or to external users of the system; and
- ❖ Email contracts: offers or contracts transmitted via email are as legally binding on LIBRA as those sent on paper.

### **Unauthorised use**

LIBRA will not tolerate the use of the email system for any of the following:

- ❖ Any message that could constitute bullying or harassment (eg. On the grounds of sex, race or disability);
- ❖ Personal use, eg social invitations, personal messages, jokes, cartoons or chain letters;
- ❖ Online gambling;
- ❖ Accessing pornography; and
- ❖ Downloading or distributing copyright information and/or any software available to the user.
- ❖ Shared access to emails outside of working hours and to anyone not employed by Libra.

### **Internet**

The use of the internet within LIBRA is encouraged, as its appropriate use provides access to a wide range of useful information. Used correctly, it is a facility which can be of valuable assistance to LIBRA and to employees in the performance of their jobs. However its inappropriate use causes many problems ranging from excessive costs for LIBRA to possible legal claims against LIBRA. Please refer to the in-depth Social Networking and IT Policy.

### **Monitoring**

LIBRA reserves the absolute right to monitor employees' use of the internet. The system also monitors for 'buzz' words.

### **Authorised use**

Access to the internet is provided to employees for matters directly concerned with the business of LIBRA. Employees with access should be aware that:

- ❖ Leaving internet access open while away from an employee's desk means that unauthorised use may occur in the absence and be attributable to the employee;
- ❖ Spending long periods of the working day on the internet means normal work is not being done or colleagues picking up an unequal share; and
- ❖ System records may be used to monitor use of the internet.

### **Unauthorised use**

LIBRA will not tolerate the use of the internet for any of the following:

- ❖ Accessing or downloading pornography or other illegal or obscene material;
- ❖ Downloading software which has not been virus checked and approved by the Systems Manager;
- ❖ Personal communication;
- ❖ Accessing online personal services such as holidays, shopping, banking; and
- ❖ Creating and/or operating a personal website.

This is not an exhaustive list.

### **Computer software**

Because of potential virus infection and consequent damage to the business, employees must not load any software into any computer without the prior approval of management. Approval will only be given after virus checking. Virus protection software is maintained and periodically updated.

Under no circumstances must games or free issue software be loaded onto LIBRA's equipment. Employees must not make 'pirate' copies of LIBRA owned software for use by other persons either inside or outside LIBRA. This not only breaks LIBRA rules, it is an illegal practice.

**Failure to comply with any procedure will give rise to disciplinary action being taken against the employee or employees concerned, and could include dismissal.**

**Social Media - Usage by Staff** *also refer to Social Media Policy*

We acknowledge that social networking has become part of everyday life with many people of all ages using social networking websites on a daily basis. All Libra staff need to be aware that 'posting' anything on these social networking websites about the children within the school, other school staff or the company could lead to disciplinary action.

If Libra staff choose to use social networking websites, they should do so wisely and cautiously bearing in mind they should not jeopardise themselves, others or their place of work. Staff are prohibited from accessing such sites using the company equipment or the company internet. The company will monitor its IT system for inappropriate usage and will take the necessary disciplinary measures if need be. Staff's posts and activities (inside and outside of working hours) on these sites may be monitored from time to time and used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings if relevant.

If Libra staff choose to use social networking websites, then it is expected that they:

- ❖ Do not discuss their role or the company in any way.
- ❖ Do not place derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive remarks about the school, work colleagues, parents, children or anyone else connected with the school.
- ❖ Do not divulge confidential information of any form.
- ❖ Do not publish photographs taken at work.
- ❖ Understand that if they do post anything online they should be mindful of the fact they could lose total control of it.
- ❖ Be careful of what other people post on their profile.
- ❖ Report any of the above if they view such behaviour through their profile or hear of such behaviour.

Poor use of social networking websites can result in harassment and distress to staff and can bring the company into disrepute. Such use is deemed totally unacceptable. For full details please refer to the Social Networking Websites Usage by Staff Policy.

**Vehicle Users' Procedure / Cars / Parking** *refer to Vehicles Staff Use Policy / memorandums and guidance on the staff server*

Employees are reminded that the vehicle provided to them is a costly item. In order to safeguard it and to ensure it is used correctly, the following must be adhered to at all times.

A vehicle is only available to employees who hold a current and valid driving licence. As all vehicles are insured through LIBRA any conviction for driving offences, any driving endorsements and any fines incurred whilst employees are in possession of the vehicle must be reported immediately. The employee is personally responsible for the payment of any fine or fixed penalty incurred whilst in charge of the vehicle.

Any employee who is considered to be acting carelessly or recklessly in their use of the vehicle will be subject to disciplinary action.

Any and every accident or incident in which a vehicle in an employee's charge becomes involved, regardless of fault and whether or not persons or property are affected, must be reported immediately.

In the event of any employee being prosecuted or convicted of a driving offence which results in a period of disqualification and the holding of a licence is an essential requirement of the job, this will result in the employee's dismissal.

A driver of a LIBRA vehicle must avoid the consumption of alcohol or drugs prior to or during the course of driving. Infringement of this rule will result in the employee's dismissal **for gross misconduct**.

Only authorised staff may drive LIBRA vehicles and detailed mileage records **MUST** be completed for every journey no matter how small.

Unauthorised passengers must not be carried in vehicles, nor must vehicles be used for personal purposes without prior permission from a Director or the Estates Manager.

All vehicles must be serviced in accordance with LIBRA's policy and/or manufacturer's recommendations. Services must be arranged on time and the service record completed and stamped by the garage.

Any employee who has the use of a vehicle is responsible for ensuring that any service, maintenance and repair is carried out.

Employees in general must ensure that the vehicle is kept in good condition. This includes keeping it clean and ensuring that the tyre pressure, lights, oil, water etc are up to the required standard.

No vehicle is to be driven in an unroadworthy condition. Any defects must be reported immediately **to Helen Wilkes (via Shannon Read) and Joan Wilkes and your Manager**. The vehicle must not be driven without the fault being rectified or prior approval given.

In the event of the vehicle requiring any repair work, prior authorisation must be obtained from a Director or the Estates Manager and/or its insurers with the required quotes.

If it is necessary to hire a replacement vehicle whilst repairs are being carried out, the employee must not do this without prior authorisation from a Director or the Estates Manager.

LIBRA's vehicles are issued on the basis that they must be available for use by another employee on LIBRA business at any time.

In the event of termination of employment, employees will not be entitled to the private use of the vehicle or entitled to compensation for the duration of their contractual notice period.

Any damage to vehicles, stock or property that is the result of your carelessness, negligence or deliberate vandalism will render you liable to pay the full or part cost of any repair or replacement. This includes the cost of damage done to company vehicles which is deemed to be your fault, you will be liable to pay at the minimum the excess insurance charge (currently £500). If you have a total of 3 incidents involving a company vehicle the Directors reserve the right to refuse you the option to drive. This will have serious consequences for your employment if you work directly with children at Libra, it may result in you being unable to complete your duties, which may result in dismissal.

If damage is caused by a child the circumstances under which this has happened will be investigated thoroughly to ensure that appropriate supervision was in place. Managers are very aware of the behaviours of children and expect staff to work closely to the individual guidelines that are laid down for each child. Should a child cause damage then there will be a full investigation to see if there has been a lack of supervision and if this is proved to be the case then the excess will still apply.

The company monitors how the cars are driven by staff on a monthly basis, in terms of exceeding national speed limits, inappropriate speeds in relation to the conditions of the roads and whether drivers are adhering to company policy concerning speeds through the village by the school and on motorways. In the event you are considered to have breached any of these areas this will be raised with you. Multiple and repeated driving issues will result in disciplinary procedures being instigated.

Any driving/speeding or parking charges/fines incurred relating to your use of a company car is your financial responsibility and the company will pass on details, where appropriate. In the event where the company pays for the charge or fine, the staff member will be invoiced accordingly or the amount deducted from wages.



You are obliged to inform the company immediately if you receive penalty points on your license or if you have an accident or driving conviction involving any other vehicle or person. This can have implications for our own insurance. In the event of failure to pay costs incurred after receiving written demands to do so, we reserve the right to deduct such costs from your pay.

### **Cars – Edgemoor Court**

Parking at Edgemoor Court is restricted and therefore you must follow the instructions laid down by the Senior Management Team regarding shared travelling.

### **Company Cars**

Company cars are issued to children's homes to be used for transporting young people for activities etc.

It is the responsibility of the Home Manager to arrange activities so that the car is used appropriately. This may mean that where cars are shared between young people, activities may have to be tailored so that the car is used when and where needed. Managers should also ensure that the car is not used frivolously and should consider whether all journeys have an essential use.

### **Staff Cars**

With the exception of regular Duty Managers and Senior Staff, staff may not use their own cars to transport young people. The reason for this involves health and safety and business insurance. If there is a specific reason for staff to use their own cars then an application must be made through the Duty Manager to the Directors and permission will only be given for extenuating circumstances and subject to the production of up to date business insurance and MOT.

When using your own car for company use, a log of your journey must be kept and the official Mileage Claim Form should be completed for re-imbursement costs (available from the office).

### **Whistleblowing** *refer to Policies: Whistleblowing / Managing Allegations Against Staff / Managing A Disclosure*

At the Libra School we are committed to the highest possible standards of openness and accountability and we encourage staff and others working with us to raise any concerns about any aspect of our work to come forward and voice those concerns. In some instances, concerns may need to be expressed on a confidential basis.

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership and/or relevant agencies. This procedure encourages staff to raise serious concerns, without fear of reprisal or victimisation, internally within school rather than over-looking a problem or raising the matter outside. It applies to all staff, agency workers and supply staff and those contractors working on the premises, for example, cleaners, builders and drivers. It also covers outside suppliers. It is recognised that whistle blowing may engender feelings of disloyalty to colleagues or that staff may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in the behaviour that is causing concern, continuing.

### **Don't think what if I'm wrong – think what if I'm right**

#### **Other Complaints Procedures**

This procedure is separate from the school Complaints Procedures and other statutory reporting procedures. Child Protection issues should be reported according to the specific guidelines laid out in that policy. Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice under this procedure will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or redundancy procedures that already affects an individual.

#### **Behaviour that should cause concern:-**

- ❖ conduct which is, has been or is likely to be an offence or breach of law
- ❖ conduct which has placed a young person at risk
- ❖ colleagues whose working practices are not adhering to Libra's agreed policies and procedures
- ❖ any fraudulent or improper use of Libra's assets or money
- ❖ any gifts or advantage being obtained corruptly

- ❖ any conflict between private interest and those of Libra
- ❖ possible fraud and corruption, verbal, sexual or physical abuse, or other unethical conduct
- ❖ discrimination of any kind
- ❖ disclosures related past, current or likely miscarriages of justice
- ❖ past, current or likely health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- ❖ past, current or likely damage to the environment

### **Reasons for whistleblowing**

- ❖ Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- ❖ To prevent the problem worsening or widening.
- ❖ To protect or reduce risks to others, young people and staff
- ❖ To prevent becoming implicated yourself.

### **What stops people from whistleblowing**

- ❖ Starting a chain of events which spirals.
- ❖ Disrupting the work or project.
- ❖ Fear of getting it wrong.
- ❖ Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
- ❖ Fear of not being believed.

### **How to raise a concern**

- ❖ You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can with your line manager. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- ❖ If your concern involves your line manager then you should approach the Principal.
- ❖ If your concern is about the Principal, or you feel you need to take it to someone outside the school contact Ofsted
- ❖ Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- ❖ Write down concerns and distinguish between fact, hearsay and opinion. Be explicit as possible with fact and hearsay.
- ❖ Where possible check the validity of your concerns
- ❖ Ideally you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- ❖ A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.
- ❖ Make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest.

### **What happens next?**

- ❖ You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- ❖ Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- ❖ No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- ❖ Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

### **Confidentiality**

All concerns raised will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if this is your wish. However, in certain cases, it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality if you are required to come forward as a witness.

### **Anonymous Allegations**

Whenever possible you should put your name to your allegation as concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful than those that are attributed to a named individual. However anonymous allegations will be considered and investigated at the school's discretion. In exercising the discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:

- ❖ the seriousness of the issues raised
- ❖ the credibility of the concern; and
- ❖ the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

**Self-reporting**

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with the Principal so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

**Further advice, support and contact details**

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from the Principal.

## Recruitment and Vetting

**Disclosure and Barring Service and Criminal Records Checks** *refer to Policies: Disclosure and Barring Service / Safer Recruitment / Safeguarding*

You are responsible for covering the payment of any required background and vetting checks, including those associated with DBS check, DBS Update, Overseas Checks.

### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Your employment is subject to a clear Disclosure and Barring Service check at Enhanced level. You must provide the original DBS certificate to the HR team promptly when requested. Without this certificate, your start date or offer of employment may be withdrawn. You must advise Libra Directors **IMMEDIATELY** if any circumstances change that will affect the validity of your Disclosure and Barring Service check. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The company will perform regularly online checks to re-validate the contents of your DBS check, in signing this contract you agree to the company undertaking such checks in order to adhere to Safeguarding guidance.

You are responsible for covering the payment of the Enhanced DBS check as well as any associated credit card fees. It is a condition of your role that you are required to join and cover the annual cost of the DBS Update Service Subscription, whilst in the employment of Libra, details will be supplied to you in advance.

### Overseas Checks

If you are a Foreign National, or have worked/lived abroad then in addition to the DBS check, LIBRA is also required to request an equivalent check from your country of residence/origin and any costs associated with this requirement is met and covered by the applicant, your full assistance will be required in obtaining such a check with the possibility of having to liaise with a local police force in order to provide finger prints – if such overseas check requires this. Information received will be retained and ultimately destroyed in accordance with Disclosure and Barring Service guidelines.

### Staff Suitability Declaration

All staff are required to complete and review (at 6 monthly intervals) our Staff Suitability Declaration form in order to declare any updates relating to their suitability to work at Libra.

### Disqualification by Association

Libra is aware of its responsibility to ensure that the company does not knowingly employ a person who is disqualified under the 2009 Regulations. Taking into account DfE guidance this only applies to staff who work in our Children's Homes, this is not applicable to those working at School. This will ensure that applicable staff are aware of the legislation including that they may be disqualified 'by association' under regulation 9 of the 2009 Regulations where they live in the same household as a disqualified person or in a household in which a disqualified person is employed.

### Right to Work in the UK

It is a condition of your role that you successfully pass the 'Right to Work in the UK' check which will be carried out by Libra HR staff. You will need to provide appropriate identification in order for this check to be undertaken, full details will be supplied during the recruitment process.

### Physical/Mental Fitness

It is a condition of your role that we verify your physical/mental fitness in order to carry out your work responsibilities. This will require your completion of our medical form. This may require further information from your GP or medical advisors, consultants or professionals, we may also need to consult our insurers. By signing this contract you acknowledge this as a condition of your role and the follow up verification that may need to be sought. This is undertaken to safeguard you, the children at Libra and your colleagues.

### Referencing

It is a condition of your role that we are provided with at least 2 satisfactory references which contain 'live' signatures (Libra always aims for 3 references as good practice). These will be from your most recent employer and we may choose any of your previous employers in this respect – based on them being

more appropriate in terms of your role eg we may opt to contact a school where you worked previously with children, rather than a more recent employer where there was no contact with children, this forms part of Libra's safeguarding requirements and culture. In the event that we receive unsatisfactory references your employment will be terminated.

Where we are requested to provide referencing services on your behalf eg for future employment (be it during or after your Libra employment), we are required to comment on whether we know of any reason why you may not be suitable to work with children, providing supporting information if they have any concerns. This includes details of any allegations or disciplinary made or action taken against you. Any request for references will require Libra to potentially access and process information that we hold about you including the time we have known you. This information extends to whether or not you worked your notice period (see 'Notice' section). Additionally, should you have any disciplinary matters that result in outcomes such as warnings; you will be informed the period the warning will remain active on your Libra personnel file, however, following the de-activation of any warnings, a record of what has occurred will be kept beyond the active period, should it be required in future eg for Safeguarding purposes or for referencing purposes/future request of information from external requirements eg tribunal claims/matters. Libra adhere to all obligations surrounding Safeguarding and GDPR requirements in this respect.

### **Qualifications**

Where your role requires specific qualifications, it is a condition of your employment that such qualifications are verified. This is usually by way of supplying us with your original certificates for verification by Libra's HR team.

## Performance

**Expectations and Obligations during and after employment** *refer to your Contract / Staff (and Visitors) Code of Conduct / Staff Capability / Dress Code Policy / Job Description*

Expectations of all staff are covered in depth through the interviewing and recruitment processes as well as our thorough induction training and monitored through regular supervision/appraisal sessions. All staff are asked to read and sign our Staff (and Visitors) Code of Conduct. Our Dress Code and Staff Capability Policy along with your Job Description also identifies areas of expectation.

It is agreed that the following obligations shall form part of the Contract of Employment between you and the Company and shall be rigorously observed.

Should any provision of this Agreement or any part of any provision be rendered void or unenforceable, then that provision or that part of that provision shall be deleted (or, in the case of the period of application, be modified as necessary to make it valid) and, as far as the context allows, all other provisions shall be unaffected.

### Working with Children

In terms of working with children, please make sure you have read Libra's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, the DfE's most recent 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' paying specific attention to Part 1, which is a mandatory requirement for all staff, and for those involved in HR and Recruitment, Part 3 is also a mandatory requirement. Additionally the most up to date 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People' must be read and understood. Both documents will be made available to you via the online software system 'Parago', details and log in is provided to you during the recruitment process. Libra's induction programme will provide full instruction and guidance on best practice, procedures and protocol in terms of working with children at Libra.

Additionally, for your information, all staff are expected - under equal opportunities for all, to work with all children. The role requires you to:

- work professionally;
- act as a suitable role model;
- support all children you work with appropriately;
- follow Libra's guidance through induction, supervision, training and policies;
- follow Libra's behaviour support plans and risk assessments without fail.

### **Reviews/Appraisals/Supervision** *refer to the Supervision Policy / Staff Performance Management Policy*

All staff receive informal reviews 6 weeks into their role to assess their feelings, performance and attitude to the role. The probationary review then follows at 3 months into service (or as stated in your contract) and it will be determined at this point if you are achieving the required standards or the role or whether any extension is required. If an extension is required, this will be scheduled taking into account the areas that are in need of focus. Appraisals and Supervisions are carried out at least annually for all Teaching, Admin and Support Staff. Teachers are also observed regularly in a classroom environment by the Principal and/or the Head of Education.

The Care Team receive extra supervision due to the nature of their role (at least monthly). Our Supervision Policy establishes the basic principles of supervision and forms part of the Libra Developmental Scheme and Libra Performance Management programme for all staff.

- ❖ Supervision is needed for Management.
- ❖ Supervision is needed for practice.
- ❖ Supervision is a right for every employee.
- ❖ Supervisors and supervisee will share responsibility for making supervision work.
- ❖ Supervision is one way of assuring that Libra is accountable for practice standards and follow the National Care Standards guidelines.

**Consumption of Alcohol/Misuse of Drugs** *refer to the Alcohol and Drugs Misuse by Staff Policy / Staff (and Visitors) Code of Conduct*

LIBRA's general rule is that alcohol is not to be consumed by staff nor should they be under the influence of drugs who are on duty for reasons of health, safety and because we act as role models. LIBRA follow a zero tolerance relating to the consumption of alcohol and being under the influence of drugs.

In rare cases for 16+ young people, permission may be sought to have a small glass of wine or a beer with a meal as a social exercise. However, this needs to be planned and permission sought from the Duty Manager/Senior Staff and permission will only be granted if Management are satisfied that there is no risk. Staff may not decide to do this without permission.

Staff are not permitted to have alcoholic drinks when having a meal out with young people and an alcoholic drink is an inappropriate item to put on the bill and LIBRA will not pay for it. On occasions, a social gathering organised by LIBRA may include a small alcoholic drink. This is for those who are not driving or in charge of young people.

Failure to adhere to the guidelines can result in complaints being raised about individual staff and if these are found to have substance, will result in disciplinary action.

We would also like to draw your attention to the amount you drink before you come on duty. A large amount of alcohol consumed the night before you come on duty may mean that you are still over the limit the following morning. Should you be found to be over the limit either through an accident or through a random test, then you would face a disciplinary charge of gross misconduct. Staff should also be aware that smelling of drink at any time when they are on duty will lead to investigation by the Directors.

**Confidentiality** *refer to the Confidentiality, Dignity and Privacy Policy*

You should all be aware that your terms and conditions of employment include clauses protecting the company, young people and all staff employed in the company from breaches of confidentiality that may or may not impinge on the professional or private status of individuals and the company as an entity.

All staff should be aware that if proven any discussion or comment regarding the young people is regarded as a breach of confidentiality and as such is regarded as gross misconduct, subject to disciplinary procedures that can include dismissal.

LIBRA's guidelines:

- ❖ The staff employment contract is based on employment legislation and staff should at all times observe respect for the privacy and confidentiality of others. Failure to do so will be dealt with under the staff disciplinary process.
- ❖ Staff should never discuss with children their intimate details of their own personal lives or those of other staff.
- ❖ Staff should never pass personal comment about other staff to the children or make such comment in the hearing of children
- ❖ Staff should remain professional at all times and any dispute with other members of staff should be addressed through the procedures laid down to deal with such disputes.
- ❖ Where a member of staff feels dissatisfaction with the work or attitude of another then this should be addressed through set procedures and protocols involving line management.

In the normal course of employment with the Company you will have access to and be entrusted with confidential information. To protect the confidentiality of this information you agree:

- not at any time, whether during or following your employment with the Company (unless expressly so authorised by the Company in writing or as a necessary part of the performance of your duties hereunder), to disclose to any person or to make use of any such confidential information;
- to deliver to the Company, before the end of your employment, or if that employment ends without notice, immediately after its end, all documents and records belonging to the Company which are in your possession or under your control, including all documents and records made by you in the

course of your employment and relating to the affairs of the Company, such as computer disks and other storage media, tapes, diaries, telephone lists and other tangible items belonging to the Company;

- not at any time to make any copy, abstract, summary or précis of the whole or any part of any document, computer program, tape or other tangible items belonging to the Company, except when required to do so in the course of your employment, in which event the disk, C.D., tape, program, copy, abstract, summary or précis shall belong to the Company and shall likewise be delivered up immediately upon termination of your employment;
- that you will, if at any time requested by the Company, delete all confidential information from any computer disks, tapes or other re-usable material in your possession or under your control and destroy all other documents and tangible items in your possession or under your control which refer to or contain any confidential information and provide confirmation to the Company that this has been undertaken;
- not at any time after the termination of your employment to represent yourself or allow yourself to be held out by any person, firm or company as being in any way connected with or interested in the Company.

You are required to sign Libra's Confidentiality Agreement via the Parago software manager system as part of your terms and conditions of your employment.

Former employees breaching confidentiality clauses can be subject to legal procedures through civil court proceedings.

#### **Training and Development** *refer to the Staff Training and Development Policy*

The Libra School has a comprehensive induction and training programme for all staff.

The Staff Training and Development Policy is available and it is your responsibility to ensure that you read and understand your training responsibilities. You will be required to sign Training Agreements to cover certificated courses (e.g. Diploma) or refund the company the cost of the course or training should you leave the company within your first year of employment with Libra, or completing the course.

Training is essential to build the foundation of good practice.

Core induction and training include behaviour management (verbal de-escalation, conflict management and managing a crisis) safeguarding and child protection, roles and responsibilities, working in school, thrive and attachment, health and safety and first aid.

Continuous professional development opportunities are varied according to career stage and role of the member of staff. There is an expectation that staff at all levels will continue to develop their skills and abilities. Mandatory refresher training is ongoing.

During induction and on an ongoing basis, online training will provide regular updates and refresher training. EduCare is our main platform for online training. There are over 30 courses covering a range of topics, including food hygiene, mental health awareness, child protection and so on.

Regular one to one supervision, team meetings, debriefs of incidents and group supervision offer the prospect to reflect and learn from experience and practice.

#### **Parago**

It is required that you sign up to Parago and access the policies to review thoroughly, understand your responsibilities completely and then sign off the legislation/policies that are allocated to you. It is expected that you act promptly in this respect – in line with any specific deadlines that are set and you are advised to avoid signing off too many policies in one go, eg you should not sign off more than 4 policies in 1 day, to show that you have given an appropriate amount of time and consideration in your review and understanding of the contents.



**Timekeeping** *refer to the Staffing Policy / Disciplinary Policy and Procedures*

Employees are responsible for attending punctually for work in accordance with the hours defined within the Statement of Main Terms of Employment. Care staff are expected to arrive for work 15mins before you shift starts to organise your overnight bag before commencing the handover.

Employees may not leave work prior to their normal finishing time without permission from their immediate Line Manager. In the event of an employee obtaining permission to have time away from work during the normal working period, he/she must report to his/her immediate Line Manager upon leaving and return to work.

Persistent lateness, unacceptable levels of absence and/or unauthorised absence will result in disciplinary action. Employees will be paid only for time worked when it is planned on the rota or authorised by the Duty Manager.

## Disciplinary and Grievance

### **Disciplinary Procedure** *refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures*

The purpose of the Disciplinary Procedure is to outline a recognised and consistent system to deal with any breach or alleged breach of the rules. The objective is to emphasise and encourage improvements in individual conduct. A full investigation will be undertaken into the circumstances of any disciplinary offence prior to the implementation of any disciplinary action. It may be necessary, dependent upon the nature of the offence, to suspend the employee on full pay whilst the necessary investigations are completed. Any such period of suspension will be as short as possible.

Letters of concern may be issued by the company to an employee where required, these will be held on the employee's personnel file and may be used in evidence during Disciplinary cases.

Disciplinary warnings will only be issued following a formal disciplinary meeting with the employee who will always be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a fellow employee or any other companion entitled to attend under current employment legislation. Throughout the Disciplinary Procedure the employee will be given every opportunity to respond to any complaint before any decision on disciplinary action is taken.

Disciplinary action may take any of the following forms according to the severity of the offence:-

#### **A verbal warning**

A record of the verbal warning will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

#### **A written warning**

A written warning will be issued to the employee and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file.

#### **A final written warning**

A final written warning will be issued to the employee and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file. Upon the issue of a final written warning, the employee will be advised that any further breaches of the rules will result in dismissal.

#### **Dismissal**

Dismissal may be with or without notice depending on the circumstances, and may occur whether or not warnings have been issued.

Employees are entitled to appeal against any disciplinary decision taken against them, such appeal being held in accordance with the Appeal Procedure.

At any time during the first year of employment, application of the procedure may be departed from, in full or in part, at the absolute discretion of the Directors, and disciplinary action including dismissal may be taken without resort to this Disciplinary Procedure.

#### **Disciplinary Rules**

This section should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Main Terms of Employment.

It is every employee's duty to observe the following general rules and to behave in a reasonable way towards fellow employees and other persons with whom an employee comes into contact when carrying out his/her duties.

Where the Working Procedures and General Rules are not followed, employees will render themselves liable to disciplinary action as outlined in the Disciplinary Procedure.

#### **General Rules**

- ❖ Employees have an obligation to ensure that they conform to the requirements of the Equal Opportunity Statement, and must not act in a manner which could be considered to be of an unlawful discriminatory nature.
- ❖ Employees are expected to achieve and maintain a good standard of work and to show a conscientious approach to the job or to the detail of that job to a standard that may reasonably be expected.
- ❖ Employees are expected to show the skill or aptitude required for the job, especially where such skills are claimed or implied at the time employment commenced.
- ❖ To ensure maximum efficiency, employees are engaged on the basis that they must be prepared to undertake reasonable duties other than those for which they have been specifically engaged.
- ❖ Visitors are not allowed onto the premises at any time without prior authority.
- ❖ An orderly and courteous manner must be maintained in front of young people and visitors.
- ❖ It is not permitted to remove material or equipment of any kind from LIBRA without prior permission.
- ❖ Working time and/or LIBRA's material or equipment must not be used for any unauthorised work.
- ❖ All authorised notices displayed are expected to be read and observed.
- ❖ Employees are expected to act wholeheartedly in the interests of LIBRA at all times. Any conduct detrimental to its interests or its relations with its young people, the general public or damaging to its public image shall be considered to be a breach of LIBRA's rules.
- ❖ Staff are not allowed to smoke whilst on duty and not in front of any young person placed with LIBRA when they are off duty. Visitors should be discouraged from smoking at any of LIBRA's premises.
- ❖ It is not permitted to use personal mobile phones for personal calls, checking messages or accessing the internet during working hours. In cases of emergency relatives, etc should use the premise's phone to contact the employee concerned.
- ❖ All employees should observe the procedures laid down in the **LIBRA Policies and Procedures**.
- ❖ The use of phones whilst driving (either your own or the company's fleet) is prohibited.
- ❖ Any statements to reporters from newspapers, radio, television etc will be given only by one of the Directors.
- ❖ We maintain a policy of 'minimum waste' which is essential to the cost-efficient and effective running of LIBRA.
- ❖ You are able to promote this policy by taking extra care in the pursuit of your duties to avoid unnecessary or extravagant use of services, time and materials. Failure to comply with this policy may result in appropriate action being taken against you.
- ❖ All staff working directly with young people or the public must be clean and tidily dressed and pay attention to their personal hygiene. This is necessary because of their position as role models and the importance of presenting a professional image to visitors.
- ❖ Other staff should wear clothing appropriate to their function.
- ❖ If you are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease or illness, you must not report to work without clearance from your own doctor. Also, any contact with persons suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported to a Director before commencing work.
- ❖ No liability is accepted for damage to staff vehicles, however it may be caused.
- ❖ No liability is accepted for any loss of, or damage to, property which you bring on to the premises. You are requested **not** to bring personal items of value onto the premises or any items which would be inappropriate if they fell into the hands of our young people.
- ❖ Articles of lost property should be handed to a member of the management team who will retain them while attempts are made to discover the owner.
- ❖ While an occasional private local call is acceptable, abuse of this privilege will render you liable to disciplinary action. Likewise, private mail should not be posted at our expense.
- ❖ You should discourage friends and family from either calling in person or by telephone **EXCEPT** in the case of an emergency.

### **References**

Where we are requested to provide referencing services on your behalf eg for future employment (be it during or after your Libra employment), we are required to comment on whether we know of any reason why you may not be suitable to work with children, providing supporting information if they have any concerns. This includes details of any allegations or disciplinary made or action taken against you. Any

request for references will require Libra to potentially access and process information that we hold about you including the time we have known you. This information extends to whether or not you worked your notice period (see 'Notice' section). Additionally, should you have any disciplinary matters that result in outcomes such as warnings; you will be informed the period the warning will remain active on your Libra personnel file, however, following the de-activation of any warnings, a record of what has occurred will be kept beyond the active period, should it be required in future eg for Safeguarding purposes or for referencing purposes/future request of information from external requirements eg tribunal claims/matters. Libra adhere to all obligations surrounding Safeguarding and GDPR requirements in this respect.

**Gross Misconduct** *refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures / see 'References' text above*

The following acts are examples of Gross Misconduct offences and as such will render employees liable to Summary Dismissal (ie. dismissal without notice). This list is not exhaustive.

- ❖ Fighting, physical assault or dangerous horseplay with staff, the public or the young people.
- ❖ Deliberate refusal or wilful failure to carry out a reasonable and lawful direct instruction given by a superior during working hours.
- ❖ Gross insubordination.
- ❖ The use of aggressive behaviour or excessive bad language to other staff, the public or young people.
- ❖ Theft, or misappropriation of colleagues, young peoples' or visitors' property.
- ❖ Wilful damage or negligence involving damage to property belonging to (or rented by) LIBRA, visitors, other employees or the general public.
- ❖ Performing, arranging or carrying out any work or activity which could be considered to be in competition with or which adversely affects in any way LIBRA's interests.
- ❖ Fraud or any other illegal offence committed against LIBRA.
- ❖ Drinking alcohol during working hours, being under the influence of alcohol/drugs and/or drug abuse. Failing a drink or drugs test whilst on duty.
- ❖ Acts of gross negligence or misconduct involving careless or reckless driving.
- ❖ Loss of driving licence on conviction when driving is all or an essential part of the job requirements.
- ❖ Gross immorality.
- ❖ Breach of safety rules and/or any action which seriously endangers the health or safety of an employee or any other person whilst at work.
- ❖ Deliberately making a false entry in LIBRA's written records of the company.
- ❖ Knowingly giving false information or deliberately omitting relevant information on the job application form or curriculum vitae.
- ❖ Unlawful discrimination.
- ❖ Unauthorised access to or disclosure of any confidential information.
- ❖ Misuse of email/internet facilities.
- ❖ Abandoning duties without notification.
- ❖ Using LIBRA computers and email accounts for behaviour of a sexualised nature.
- ❖ The theft of LIBRA equipment and resources.
- ❖ Leaving the scene of a vehicle accident when driving a company vehicle.

**Right of Appeal**

All staff can appeal against a disciplinary decision must be notified to a Director nor previously involved, either verbally or in writing, within three working days of the receipt of written confirmation of disciplinary action taken.

The appeal will be considered as soon as possible and an invitation will be made to discuss the matter fully. The outcome of this appeal will be final.

The outcome of the appeal, together with copies of all correspondence, will be retained on the Personnel file.

An employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or accredited trade union official.

**Grievance Procedure** *refer to the Grievance Policy and Procedures*

Where there is a grievance relating to any aspect of employment, the following procedure should be adopted:

- ❖ The grievance should be raised verbally, or in writing, with your Line Manager or a Director. Where appropriate a meeting will be held to enable the employee to give full details. Sufficient time will then be allowed for the facts of the case to be considered, and the outcome notified to the employee.
- ❖ Should your Line Manager or Director not be able to satisfactorily resolve the grievance, the matter should be referred either verbally, or in writing, to a Director not previously involved, whose decision will be final.

An employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or accredited trade union representative at any stage of the procedure.

## Absence/Holiday/Leave

### **Holiday Entitlement & Conditions** *refer to the Holiday Arrangements document*

Entitlement to annual holidays is detailed on each employee's Contract. Part time staff attract pro rata calculations.

When employees leave, payment will normally be made for all unused accrued holiday entitlement. If employees have taken more annual holiday entitlement than they have accrued during the holiday year the balance will be deducted from any outstanding pay.

Unused accrued holiday entitlement cannot be carried forward into the next holiday year nor can it be paid out. Any unused holiday entitlement will be allocated at the company's discretion. Unpaid leave cannot be guaranteed and will only be permitted following a specific request made to the Directors which will be considered individually and accordingly to circumstances.

Annual holiday entitlement in excess of the statutory minimum entitlement will cease to accrue in cases where an employee is absent from work for a continuous period in excess of 12 weeks. Accrual will recommence after the completion of 1 calendar month of working.

Unused accrued holiday pay in excess of the statutory minimum entitlement will not be paid at the end of employment, where termination is due to gross misconduct or where the full contractual notice period is not served and worked.

Employees accrue holiday entitlement during the Ordinary Maternity Leave period. Where employees qualify for Additional Maternity Leave, holiday entitlement in excess of the statutory minimum does not accrue during this period but will recommence immediately upon return to work.

### **Pregnancy, Maternity/Paternity Rights and Parental Leave** *refer to Policies: Staff Absence and Leave / Staffing / New and Expectant Mothers at Work*

You have certain statutory rights if you are pregnant. These are addressed in turn below; listing what conditions must be met for you to be entitled to the rights. To obtain the benefit of each right, you must have complied with all of the conditions.

#### **Ante-Natal Care**

You are entitled to reasonable time off work with pay to attend for ante-natal care at appointments made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife or registered health worker. If requested, you must provide a certificate of pregnancy and an appointment card.

Pregnant staff need to be aware that working at the farm school can attract added risks (from infection) from contact with sheep and the farm cat. Therefore, staff are advised to inform the School Manager of their pregnancy so that arrangements can be made for you to work elsewhere during your pregnancy.

#### **Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)**

If you stop work and meet all of the following conditions, you are entitled to receive SMP. You must therefore:

- ❖ Have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC).
- ❖ Have average weekly earnings of not less than the figure set by the Government for the payment of National Insurance Contributions.
- ❖ Still be pregnant at the 11<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC or have given birth by that time.
- ❖ Give at least 28 days' notice that you intend to stop work.
- ❖ Provide medical evidence of the EWC.

For the first 6 weeks SMP is payable at the earnings related rate (equivalent to 90% of earnings) and for the remaining **33 weeks** at the standard rate as set by the Government.

### **Ordinary Maternity Leave**

If you stop work no earlier than the 11<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC, and you meet the following conditions, you are entitled to 39 weeks' ordinary maternity leave. Whilst on ordinary maternity leave all contractual benefits except for your pay will be maintained as if you were not absent. At the end of your maternity leave you are entitled to return to the job you were in before you went away. To comply you must:

- ❖ Notify LIBRA (in writing if requested) by the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC unless that is not reasonably practicable, of the following:
- ❖ That you are pregnant;
- ❖ The EWC;
- ❖ The date on which you intend your ordinary maternity leave to start; and
- ❖ If requested, provide medical evidence of the EWC.

You are legally prohibited from working during the two weeks immediately after the birth; this is known as the "compulsory maternity leave period" and is considered part of the ordinary maternity leave period.

If you wish to return to work prior to the end of the ordinary maternity leave, you must give at least 28 days' notice of your intended date of return.

### **Additional Maternity Leave**

In addition to the right to ordinary maternity leave as above, you have the right to additional time off and to return to your original job, providing all of the following conditions are met and it is reasonably practicable. You must:

- ❖ Have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks by the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC.
- ❖ Be entitled to ordinary maternity leave.
- ❖ Return within a period of 13 weeks calculated from the end of your ordinary maternity leave (to give you 52 weeks leave in total). If you wish to return to work prior to the end of the additional maternity leave period, you must give at least 28 days' notice of your intended date of return.

The above information is given for guidance purposes only and confers no extra rights to you beyond those provided by the Government.

### **Statutory Paternity Leave**

When your wife, partner or civil partner gives birth, you may qualify for Statutory Paternity Pay, providing all of the following conditions are met:

- ❖ You must be the biological father or adopter of the child or be the mother's (or adopter's husband), husband, partner or civil partner or have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- ❖ You must have continued to work for the same employer without a break for at least 26 weeks by the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the baby is due, or employed up to and including the week your wife, partner or civil partner was matched with a child.
- ❖ You must continue to work for that employer without a break up to the date the child is born or placed for adoption.

LIBRA will pay Statutory Paternity Pay to you in the same way and at the same time as your normal wages. Statutory Paternity Pay is treated as normal pay therefore deductions for tax and National Insurance will be made in the usual way.

To claim Statutory Paternity Pay you must tell your employer when you intend to take leave by the 15<sup>th</sup> week before your baby is due, or within 7 days of your wife, partner or civil partner being told by the adoption agency that they have been matched with a child.

You can choose when to start getting your Statutory Paternity Pay. Leave can start on any day of the week:

- ❖ On or following the child's birth; but must be completed within 8 weeks of the actual date of birth (or 8 weeks after the expected date of birth if the baby is born early)

- ❖ From the date of the child's placement, but must be completed within 8 weeks of the date of the placement.

You can either take 1 week or 2 consecutive weeks, but not odd days.

### **Statutory Sick Pay** *refer to the Staff Absence and Leave Policy*

Employees may be entitled to receive pay when they are absent from work due to sickness. This is known as Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and is paid out and administered by employers on behalf of the Government. Please review gov.uk for their statutory guidance and calculations.

There are many requirements and conditions attached to payment of SSP both for the employee and employer. If employees are to receive their entitlement, the following rules and procedures together with those set out in the procedure for absence notification must be adhered to.

### **Notification**

Staff (or someone on their behalf) should notify their Line Manager, Duty Manager, Director or Head of Education direct, **as well as the school office** (Shannon and Julie) at your earliest opportunity in any case before you are due to start work/your shift. At this time, you should provide the following information:

- ❖ Reasons for your absence as well as a likely return date (which is important for LIBRA to determine cover arrangements)
- ❖ Details of work requirements and forward lesson plans etc by email, where applicable and depending on the nature of your illness.
- ❖ Details of any outstanding work to be done.

SSP cannot be paid to an employee unless and until the following written evidence is supplied:

- ❖ After 4 days of absence – a Self Certification form (you can download this form via the following link: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/sc2.pdf> or collect a copy from Kirsty Crosby), an absence record form or Doctor's Statement of Fitness for Work Certificate
- ❖ Thereafter – Doctor's Statement of Fitness for Work Certificate
- ❖ It is important to remember that no payment can be made for any intervals of sickness absence not covered by a certificate

Should you possess a Self Certification Form or Doctor's Statement of Fitness for Work Certificate you must forward it to the wages clerk at your earliest convenience in order for it to be processed and included in your wages at the appropriate time. If you miss the processing date (which you can confirm by contacting Kirsty Crosby) the SSP payment will have to be processed the following month.

### **When SSP is Payable**

SSP is normally only paid for a day or days an employee works. For example, if an employee works Monday to Friday and not at weekends, SSP will normally apply to those 5 days.

SSP cannot be paid for the first 3 days of sickness. Therefore, payment starts on the 4<sup>th</sup> day, and continues for as long as the employee is absent up to a maximum of 28 weeks in any one period of sickness. However, if an employee is absent due to sickness within 8 weeks of a previous period of sickness and providing both periods of absence are for 4 days or more (calendar days), SSP will be paid from the start of the second period of absence.

SSP is paid in exactly the same way as normal earnings, although the employee's average earnings must be over the National Insurance Lower Earnings Limit to qualify for SSP.

### **When SSP is not Payable**

SSP is not payable in certain circumstances, the principal ones being:

- ❖ Once employment has terminated;
- ❖ Where Statutory Maternity Pay is being paid; and
- ❖ Where an employee is over 65 years of age or under the age of 16.



## Important

Any employee who has been absent due to sickness and is found not to have been genuinely ill, will be subject to disciplinary action which could include dismissal.

## Self Certification Form

The Self Certificate Form can be obtained via <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/sc2.pdf> or from Kirsty Crosby at Edgemoor Court. A copy should be completed to cover all periods of absence.

Where the reason for the absence is sickness, the following rules will apply:-

1. All periods of absence for reasons of sickness, in excess of one working week, must be supported by a Doctor's Statement of Fitness for Work Certificate which must be made available to the wages department at the earliest possible time (as mentioned above).
2. Where more than three periods of 'uncertificated' absence occur in any 12 month period, you may be required to obtain, at your own expense, a Private Medical Certificate from your Doctor. This must be made available to the wages department at the earliest possible time.
3. Absence on the grounds of sickness of a period of 24 hours immediately preceding or following a public, statutory or annual holiday will be treated as unauthorised unless supported by a Private Medical Certificate or authorised Self Certification Form.
4. Excessive periods of absence may lead to a medical examination to determine your continued suitability to perform your contractual duties.

Where the reason for your absence is known prior to the absence occurring you must inform your Line Manager (or a Director) and the rota team, a completed Self Certification Form must be submitted to the wages department when the request for permission to be absent is made.

In all other cases, the form should be completed immediately following your return to work.

Depending on the length of absence, Libra may undertake a return to work interview, this will usually be undertaken by your Line Manager (or senior member of staff in this absence). As a general rule of thumb, it will be for those who have been ill for more than one whole usual week of work. This will be held on your staff file for future reference. If persistent absence occurs Libra could instigate more return to work interviews for you, in order to ensure the health, safety and mental and physical state of our employees are at the forefront of our intentions, this will allow us to review and if necessary make any reasonable adjustments deemed necessary.

## Note:-

Unauthorised absence will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the established procedures, and in extreme cases may result in dismissal.

## **Statutory Time Off** *refer to the Staff Absence and Leave Policy*

### **Time off for dependents**

The right to take time off for dependants is contained in the Employment Rights Act 1996 and states employees are entitled to a reasonable amount of time off in order to take action that is necessary for one of the following reasons:

- ❖ To provide assistance on an occasion when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted.
- ❖ To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured.
- ❖ In consequence of the death of a dependant.
- ❖ Because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant.
- ❖ To deal with an incident which involves a child of the employee and which occurs unexpectedly during school time.

The right to dependant leave is only to cover unexpected events. If employees know in advance they are going to need time off, they should try to arrange something during the school holidays, their own annual

leave or by exercising their statutory right to parental leave. Further discretionary/compassionate leave might be arranged (as outlined below).

### ***Public duties***

Under current employment legislation employees who hold certain public positions are entitled to reasonable time off during normal working hours to perform the duties associated with the position. Such positions include Magistrates, Local Councillors, and Statutory Tribunal Members etc. Employees are not however, entitled to payment for this time.

### ***Jury Service***

Employees are entitled to time off work to fulfil their obligations with regard to Jury Service. In the event of an employee being summoned to attend for Jury Service, he/she must notify management immediately on receipt of the Jury Summons, giving details of dates required to attend the Court.

Employees retained on Jury Service for a prolonged period have an obligation to notify management and must keep in regular contact with their Line Manager throughout. Employees must return to normal working immediately following their release from Jury duties.

Employees are reminded to ensure that expenses claims are submitted to the Court in accordance with the available allowances.

Although employees are not entitled to payment for this time off, LIBRA will consider requests to make up any difference between any compensation and basic earnings where a shortfall occurs, provided that the maximum amount of compensation has been claimed from the Court.

### ***Compassionate Leave***

Any requests for compassionate leave should be referred to the Senior Management Team. The request will be reviewed individually and compassionately. As a result there are no absolute rules. However the guidelines below and any leave beyond the guidelines need to be negotiated with the Senior Management.

### ***Death of an immediate/close family member***

Employees should note that there is no legal right to compassionate leave as a result of bereavement, apart from the needs to arrange a funeral, probate etc. However, LIBRA will consider the situation individually and compassionately and a decision relating to leave etc will be made at the discretion of the Directors.

### ***Death of a relative***

If an employee needs to attend the funeral of a relative, LIBRA will consider this request.

### ***Illness of a dependent***

There is a statutory allowance of a reasonable amount of time for employees to deal with sudden emergencies and make any longer term arrangements. There is no definition of reasonable in employment law, it depends on circumstances. It is not expected that a parent takes 2 weeks to care for a child with chicken pox, indeed LIBRA does not expect staff to take several concurrent days to look after a dependant.

The Senior Management Team will review any agreed leave etc on an individual and compassionate basis.

### ***Medical appointments of dependents***

Where necessary, leave will be granted for staff to attend the medical appointments of dependants, however this will be unpaid. Where possible it is expected that employees will try to arrange these appointments at times to minimise the disruption to the company.

### ***Notification of appointments***

At your earliest convenience, you must email Julie and Shannon in the office with details of your appointment, including nature, time and date, this will be reviewed and they will respond to you accordingly. On approval, you will be required to add the appointment to SIMS Calendar.

### **Statutory Parental Leave**

The purpose of Parental Leave is to care for your child. This means looking after their welfare and could include making arrangements for the good of your child. Caring for your child does not necessarily mean being with your child 24 hours a day. Parental leave might be taken simply to enable you to spend more time with your young child for instance:

- ❖ Spending more time with your child in their early years
- ❖ Accompanying a child during a stay in hospital
- ❖ Looking at new schools
- ❖ Settling your child into new childcare arrangements
- ❖ Enabling your family to spend more time together, for example, taking your child to stay with grandparents

Employees are not entitled to payment for this time off.

You can take parental leave immediately after maternity, paternity or adoption leave providing you give the correct notice.

Employees may be entitled to unpaid parental leave as follows if they:

- ❖ Have been employed by LIBRA for a year or more
- ❖ Are an 'employee' (with a contract of employment). Most agency and casual/bank staff do not have the right to parental leave

And you:

- ❖ Are a parent named on the child's birth certificate or
- ❖ Are named on the child's adoption certificate or
- ❖ Have legal parental responsibility for a child under 5 (18 if disabled)

If you are separated from your partner and you do not live with the children you have the right to parental leave if you keep formal parental responsibility for the children.

Foster parents do not have rights to parental leave.

You are entitled to take a total of 18 weeks' parental leave for each of your children up until their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

If your child is adopted you can take a total of up to 18 weeks' parental leave until the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their placement with you or until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, whichever comes first.

If your child is disabled (that is, getting a disability allowance) you have the right to take up to 18 weeks' parental leave until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

You must take your leave in blocks of full weeks (unless the child is disabled), so for taking your child to the dentist you should use your holiday allowance instead. A week is based on your specific working pattern, so for instance, if you worked Mondays and Tuesdays only, your week would be 2 days only whereas if you work Monday to Friday inclusive your working week is 5 days.

You are not allowed to take more than 4 weeks for any one child in any one year. For these purposes a year starts when you become eligible for parental leave. This is either when the child is born or when you have worked for your employer continuously for more than 1 year, whichever comes later.

You must give at least 21 days' notice when you want to take parental leave. If you wish to take parental leave immediately after the birth or adoption you should give notice 21 days before the expected week of childbirth. If your child is born prematurely or where less than 21 days' notice is given that your child is to be placed with you for adoption, you should give notice as soon as possible.

LIBRA may ask to see the following documentation when considering requests for Parental Leave:

- ❖ Your child's birth certificate
- ❖ Papers confirming your child's adoption or the date of placement in adoption cases
- ❖ The aware of disability living allowance for your child

Unless you want to take parental leave immediately following maternity, paternity or adoption leave, LIBRA can postpone your leave for up to 6 months if it is felt that your absence would disrupt business activities. In which case, LIBRA will discuss the position with you and confirm in writing within 7 days of your request being received the reasons for the postponement and the revised dates for your parental leave, as agreed with you. The length of leave you are given should reflect the length of leave you requested. If the postponement goes past the end of the entitlement period, you will still be able to take the leave.

During parental leave your statutory employment benefits continue as if you were still in post.

***Parental bereavement leave and pay***

Bereaved parents are entitled to take leave as a two-week period, two separate periods of one week, or as a single week. They have 56 weeks from the date of their child's death to take leave.

## Termination of Employment

**Resignation and Notice** *refer to your Contract / Disciplinary Policy and Procedures*

### **By you**

If you wish to resign, you should do so in writing giving such notice as is specified in your Contract.

### **By the company**

You will be entitled to receive from LIBRA the notice as is specified in your Contract or any more recent Amendments to Contract.

### **Gross Misconduct**

You will be summarily dismissed (ie. without notice) if there has been an act of Gross Misconduct. Generally this includes any breach of duty, conduct which brings LIBRA into disrepute or action which is inconsistent with the relationship required between employee and employer; but further examples are contained at Gross Misconduct in Rules and Procedures.

### **Working your notice**

If you do not provide and/or work the stipulated notice period in full, this would constitute as a breach of your terms and conditions and your pay and holiday entitlement will be calculated accordingly to reflect this. For those working with children, the breach in contract may be communicated in future references that Libra is asked to provide (where the role also relates to working with children) as this is deemed a significant action based on the responsibility undertaken in relation to children's attachment difficulties, as communicated through the interview process and during induction as to the damage to children's attachments when notice is not worked. There is a professional expectation that notice is worked so as to minimise and manage the effect it has on children's mental health.

### **Short Service Staff** *refer to Policies: Staff Capability / Staff Performance*

Libra may use an abbreviated process for dismissal, or no process, where an individual has less than two years' service - in line with 'Short Service Staff' as per their contract of employment extract:

'For staff who have less than 2 years of service, the company can review an employee's capability, custom and practice and if it is deemed that the employee is not achieving the expected requirement of their role or is not following policies and procedures then the company can terminate the employee's employment. The notice issued will be in line with your contract of employment but may be waived by either party by mutual agreement. Libra may use an abbreviated process for dismissal, or no process, where an individual has less than two years' service.'

### **Shortage of Work and Redundancy Policy** *refer to Policies: Staffing / Staff Absence and Leave*

Every attempt will be made to ensure your continuing employment in the event that the Company is faced with a shortage of work situation or is unable to provide you with work for any other reason. However, this could include temporarily placing you on short time working or laying you off from work; in these circumstances you will be paid for those hours worked, or in accordance with the statutory guarantee pay provisions. If there is no similar work available (eg due to a shortage of young people), alternative work may be offered but this may not be at your current rate of pay.

In the event that the need arises to reduce the number of employees the overriding consideration at all times will be the future viability of the business. LIBRA may use some or all of the following, as are deemed appropriate at the time of the redundancy, eg job performance, relative capabilities, length of continuous service, reliability, conduct, attendance record and suitability for the work which remains and any other factor which it considers relevant. LIBRA will give such weight to each of the criteria as considered appropriate.

If the selection of employees for redundancy becomes necessary, the following will be considered:

- ❖ Total work experience
- ❖ Qualifications
- ❖ Previous disciplinary

- ❖ Absence
- ❖ Conduct records
- ❖ Length of service

At all times, the overriding consideration will be the future viability of LIBRA.

### **Retirement**

The normal retirement age at LIBRA is 65 years. In practice this will mean that the retirement date will be at the end of the month in which the 65<sup>th</sup> birthday occurs. In the event of an employee asking or being requested to continue working beyond the normal retirement age for whatever reason and this is agreed, new Terms and Conditions of Employment will come into force. These will be discussed with the employee on an individual basis.

## Appendices/Supporting Documents

**Frequently Asked Questions** *refer to your Line Manager if you have further questions not covered below*

1. **When do I get paid?** The last working day of the month

2. **If I have worked extra eg training etc who do I tell to ensure I get paid?**

Staff need to inform Shannon Read by email – as soon as possible to ensure you are paid promptly (and don't miss the payroll deadline which is usually around 19<sup>th</sup> of every month).

3. **Can I use my own car when I am working?** Contact one of the Senior Management Team (refer to the 'Travel Expenses' section of this Handbook)

4. **Can I smoke?**

LIBRA is a non-smoking organisation. This means that no smoking is permitted on or around children's homes or the school buildings or when staff are on duty and or whilst in the company of young people. Staff are not permitted to collude with young people to allow them to smoke. Staff are required to act as role models for young people and to maintain the policies of the company regardless of their personal habits and preferences. It is not acceptable for staff to smell of smoke.

5. **Can I use my mobile?**

You may carry your mobile phone but you **MUST NOT** use it for personal calls, checking messages or accessing the internet when you are working. It will require immediate intervention from senior staff if you are seen using your phone in the presence of children, as there could be Safeguarding implications – you must be aware of this in order to safeguard yourself, please refer to the Mobile Phone Policy and Safeguarding Policy for full information. This can cause the young people distress and has a huge effect on their self-esteem. It is also a distraction and **MUST NOT** be used at School. If you are in any doubt about mobile and device useage, please liaise with your Line Manager or the Senior Management Team.

6. **Can I use the company phone for personal calls?** Only in an absolute emergency – you must ask at the office. The office phones are not to be used but they can suggest where you might be able to make a call.

7. **Can I talk about my family?** Please refer to the confidentiality section above.

8. **Can I take the young person to meet my family?** No, this is not appropriate, please liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead for clarification.

9. **Can I buy a young person a present for birthday or Christmas?**

No, you may buy them a card but no presents. Staff who buy presents for young people put huge pressure on those who do not.

10. **Can I tell my family/friends about what I do at work?** No, your work is confidential.

11. **I know I have been booked for speeding, what should I do?**

Inform the Directors immediately. In their absence you should inform your Line Manager and copy in Shannon Read by email.

12. **I have had a crash in a company car, what should I do?**

Inform the Duty Manager who will then inform the Directors or Senior on Call immediately. In their absence you should inform the Director of Care or Principal. You will need to complete a form detailing the situation; this form must be brought in by the Manager and put into Joan Wilkes' pigeonhole – the next day. Please note if the accident was your fault you will be liable for the £500 excess charge on the company insurance policy.

13. **I know another member of staff has done something wrong, what should I do?**

IMMEDIATELY: refer to the Whistleblowing policy – a copy of which is available in the School Office and School Server.

**14. A young person has told me a disclosure, what do I do?**

IMMEDIATELY: Refer to the Safeguarding Policy - given with your induction and recruitment paperwork, in the office or from your Line Manager for another copy.

**15. I received a parking ticket whilst on shift, what should I do?**

Inform the Directors immediately. In their absence you should inform the Duty Manager or Principal. You will be required to pay for the parking ticket yourself.

**16. I'm unsure how the holiday works, who should I speak to?**

Refer to the School Manager.

**17. Do I have to pay for my own activities? No**

**18. What is the company's guidance on appearance?**

Refer to the Staff Dress Code Policy, but on the whole, Staff should arrive for work clean, tidy, with no low cut tops, no large earrings, and conservative make up. Staff and young people should wear overalls that are need for some outdoor lessons and a suitable outdoor coat and wellington boots. When attending reviews or court with young people you are expected to wear smart clothes.

### **Travel Expenses**

All Libra staff are expected to work at any of the company properties. The company does not allow mileage claims from teachers for movements between teaching locations. If care staff are required to use their personal vehicles for company use, your travel will be reimbursed at a rate which will be announced to you beforehand.

No member of staff should use his/her own vehicle for LIBRA business without:

- ❖ Having registered with a Director a copy of their insurance showing that they are covered for business use.
- ❖ Having received the express permission of a senior member of staff ie a Director, Director of Care or Principal. Reimbursement for the use of a private vehicle will be based on the current school mileage rate and on the completion of a reimbursement of an appropriate purchase order.

Expenses are only paid for breakfast and evening meals for teachers when away on company business on production of reasonable receipts. Staff are required to provide lunch as this is an expectation on a usual working day.



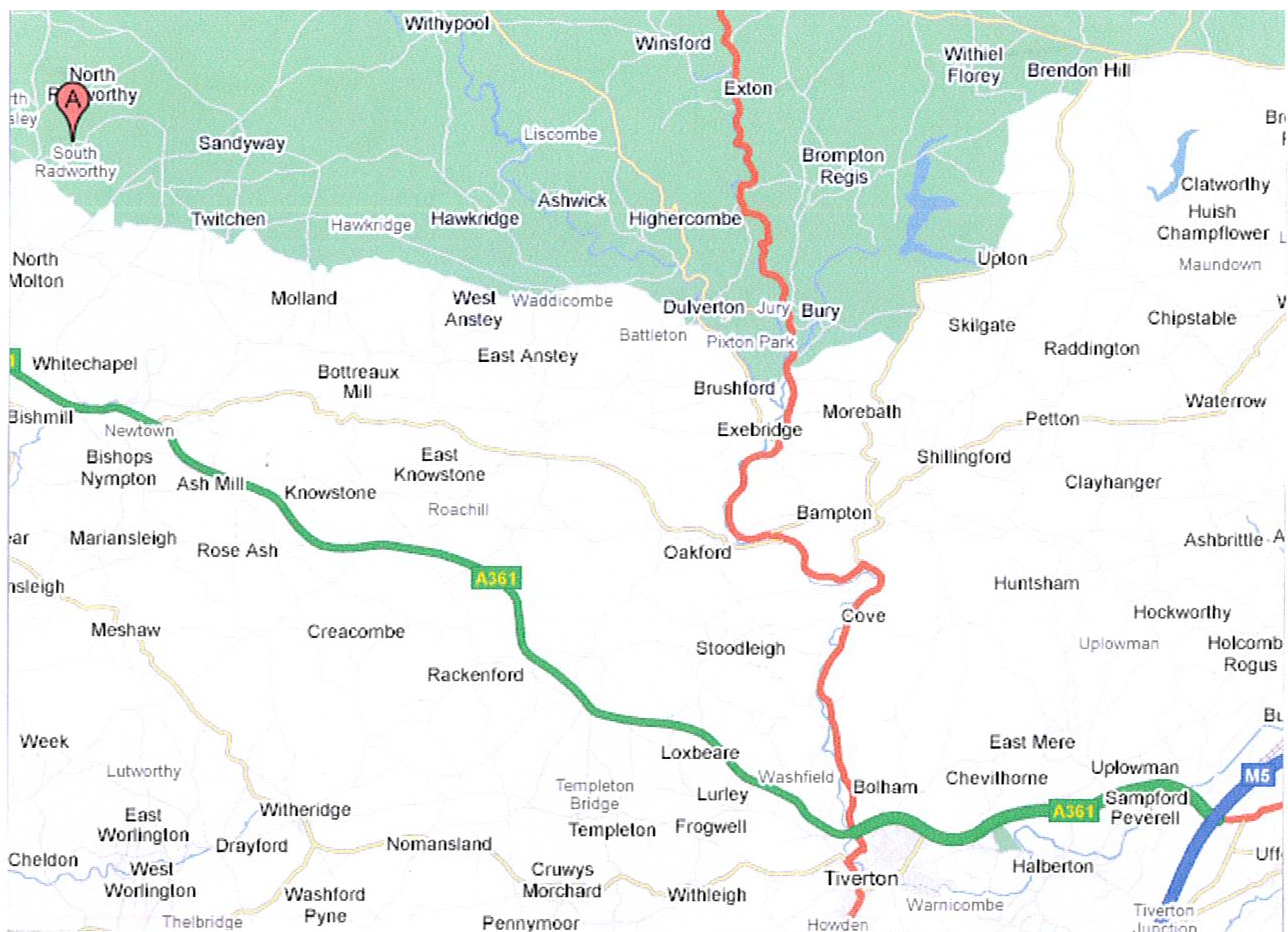
### Map to School and Directions to Homes

School: Libra School, Edgemoor Court, South Radworthy, South Molton, Devon, EX36 3LN.

Tel: 01598 740044

Email [admin@libraschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@libraschool.co.uk)

Ordnance Survey Grid Ref: SS748327



Leave M5 Motorway at Junction 27 and follow the A361 towards BARNSTAPLE.

- After approx 25 miles (40km) turn right towards NORTH MOLTON.
- In North Molton, fork left immediately after the petrol station and follow the road into Church Square.
- In Church Square turn left signposted HEASLEY MILL.
- After approx 1 mile (1.6km) fork right signposted HEASLEY MILL (take care at this junction).
- Follow the road for approx 2 miles (3.2km) into HEASLEY MILL.
- In Heasley Mill fork right towards SOUTH RADWORTHY (Do not follow the road to North Radworthy)
- Follow the road for just over 1 mile (2km) then turn tight into EDGEMOOR COURT.

### Distances:

From Manchester 245 miles (392km) - 4 to 5 hours approx

From London 206 miles (230km) - 3.5 hours approx

From Exeter Airport 45 miles (72km) - 1 hour approx

From Bristol 90 miles (144km) - 2 hours approx