



Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Date:	
Date approved by Management Committee:	January 2019
Signature of Chair of Management Committee:	Sue Cain
To be reviewed:	Annually

This policy sets out the school's expectations for staff behaviour and conduct. It must be read alongside the applicable HR policies.

Purpose

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- All staff who are employed by the school, including the Head teacher
- All staff working in an outreach capacity i.e. home/hospital tuition, Alternative Provision, school outreach working.

This Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- peripatetic staff who are centrally employed by the LA
- employees of external contractors and providers of services (e.g. contract cleaners)
- (Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body)

Principles

Everyone who comes in contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Therefore, it is important that ALL staff:

- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child
- Ensure that they report any concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately
- Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Head teacher or Chair of Management Committee if the allegation is relation to the Head teacher.
- Ensure that they attend regular training/updates to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of risk to the child
- The welfare of the child is paramount. Understand it is the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people
- Who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way
- Ensure professional standards are applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity
- Should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the settings policies and practice.

Setting an example

- All staff who work in schools should set examples of behaviour and conduct.
- All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.
- All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Safeguarding pupils

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

The school's DSL is Garry Stevens.

Staff are provided with personal copies of the Staff Handbook which contains the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.

Staff must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Pupil Development

Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of pupils.

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

Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

Honesty & Integrity

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

Conduct Outside of Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

Disqualification by Association – All employees are required to provide relevant information about a person who lives in the same household as the employee, who may have influence over the employee working with children and who may therefore pose a risk to children, i.e. “by association”.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

Confidentiality

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil as per the GDPR.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's parent/carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must **never** promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

Where staff have access to confidential information this must be stored safely, e.g. using encrypted memory sticks, not leaving confidential information in cars or on disks.

Disciplinary Action

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Professional Relationships

With children:

We act respectfully towards children at all times, for example:

- Speaking in a calm and objective way, even in the face of challenging circumstances
- Using a range of vocal volume that is appropriate to the learning activity (we may raise our voices in a controlled way to achieve a desired impact, but we never shout in anger)
- Showing good manners to children and thereby modelling what good manners are

- Taking seriously what *all* children tell us - **our first response** is always to believe what we are told
- Giving children time to express themselves
- Considering how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves
- Pursuing settlements to conflicts between children in a way that is demonstrably fair and listens to all points of view before making a considered judgement
- We judge children based on the current situation and not on past behaviour
- Making clear to children why a course of action has been necessary

We uphold the school's policies and procedures on Behaviour and Child Protection in our dealings with children. We acknowledge that we are in 'loco parentis' and, as such, have a duty of care for all children in the school.

We are consistent in the way that we apply rewards and sanctions to the children, so that each individual child knows that they will receive the same treatment from any member of staff.

We understand that children have a right to be heard.

We are friendly and supportive to all children, but maintain our professionalism at all times. We acknowledge that some interactions that seek to 'be friends' with children can create ambiguity in the relationship and are unhelpful.

We protect ourselves and our pupils by making sure that we avoid being alone with individual children, but if it is unavoidable to do so, we ensure that we are in a place where others can see us.

We use physical contact with children in a careful, sensitive and respectful way. A hand on the shoulder or head is often a good way of engaging with an individual child. However, any physical contact should be avoided when staff members are alone with individual children, except in emergency. We adopt the principle that parents want their children to be given a certain level of physical reassurance if distressed, hurt or otherwise in need. This is the case for all children, but may be appropriate more frequently for younger children.

We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors
When speaking to children, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.

We teach and respond to children as unique individuals.

We have a professional responsibility to inform an appropriate person if we believe that a colleague is behaving in a way that compromises the safety or well-being of any child or group of children.

With parents:

Parents have an entitlement to be informed about their child's learning and well-being. We always seek to involve and engage parents in this process.

We recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or well-being.

We always seek to work in partnership with parents, using their understanding of their own child to help us to provide the best learning opportunities that we can.

We recognise that parents' worries and concerns can be extremely emotive and we acknowledge that, at times, we will need to speak to parents when they are upset.

If we are concerned that a parent may be aggressive or otherwise inappropriate towards us, we can ask for a colleague (usually a senior leader) to be present.

In extreme circumstances, the Head teacher may decide that it is safer for a teacher to communicate with a parent through different means.

We are honest with parents, without undermining colleagues and respond fairly to their concerns irrespective of their race, religion, culture or social background.

When speaking to parents, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.

We acknowledge that we are human and will all make mistakes from time to time.

We take responsibility for our actions and are willing to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors.

We protect ourselves by ensuring that we meet with parents in areas of the school that are visible and easily accessible to other staff members, while remembering to be sensitive to the confidential nature of some discussions. We always make sure that colleagues know when and where we are meeting with parents.

Home visits are only carried out in accordance with Local Authority attendance/inclusion procedures as set out in the lone working policy.

Lone working protocols are followed as set out in the lone working policy.

We recognise the right to confidentiality of all members of the school community.

With other members of staff:

We act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of our relative position or status within the school hierarchy, for example:

- Staff have an obligation to share with senior management any information which gives rise to concern about the safety/welfare of a member of staff.
- Speaking politely to one another
- Being flexible and understanding of necessary changes within the school day
- Assuming that the actions of others are carried out in good faith
- Communicating clearly and honestly with colleagues
- Addressing concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone
- Being publicly supportive of colleagues, and dealing with concerns or disagreements privately, with support if necessary

We share a responsibility to encourage and support our colleagues in their professional development.

We consider all members of the staff team to have equal value, irrespective of their job, and we treat them accordingly.

When speaking to colleagues, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.

Concerns raised with managers are dealt with confidentially. If further action is required, the manager has responsibility to inform only the appropriate senior person within the school.

We recognise that we are all accountable for our actions and performance and that from time to time leaders and managers will need to deliver feedback that is challenging. All individual feedback is given sensitively, and constructively and should only be shared with those staff members that need to know (e.g. line manager or mentor).

By approaching issues with colleagues in a way that always seeks to solve potential problems in a positive way.

We never act in a way that publicly undermines a colleague.

We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors.

Staff Dress Code

- We dress in a manner that exhibits the importance of the job that we do.
- We wear smart, professional and practical clothes.
- We avoid wearing clothes that could cause offence or embarrassment to others.
- When leading physical activities and/or PE lessons we change into suitable clothing for that lesson (e.g. training shoes and track-suit).
- We understand our own Health and Safety.
- Footwear must be smart and professional and appropriate for the role you carry out. Trainers must only be worn in PE sessions for example.

Other Areas

Members of teaching staff arrive in school by 8.30 am and must use the signing in and out system. Repeated failure to do this could result in a disciplinary.

Other staff members arrive in school in good time to begin their contracted hours.

If for any reason we are delayed in the morning, it is our responsibility to ensure that the appropriate person in school is informed as soon as possible.

Staff mobile phones should be stored securely away during the school day. Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photographs of pupils. Personal mobile phones should not be used near pupils. Checking of personal phones must be done so away from pupils.

Staff who smoke must do it outside of the hours the pupils are present and must be done away from school site.

Sickness must be reported as early as possible, and no later than 8am to the Head teacher so that cover can be arranged and meetings where applicable, re-scheduled.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored for its efficacy and reviewed and amended annually.

Role & Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to manage their own behaviour both in and out of school and they must fulfil their roles within school with maximum effort and a positive attitude at all times. It is unacceptable for staff to treat pupils with a lack of care, dignity and respect regardless of the behaviour being exhibited by the pupil at that time. It is also the responsibility of staff to report to the Head teacher where they feel another member of staff's conduct has been questionable.

The Head teacher carries ultimate responsibility for monitoring and managing staff conduct and will initiate disciplinary investigations and procedures as when and necessary and report to the Management Committee.

Where staff feel the Head teacher's conduct is questionable they must report this to the Chair of the Management Committee.

UNICEF - UNCRC

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child sets out human rights of every person under 18 and applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background (Article 2).

Articles directly relating to this policy are:

- Article 3 (best interests of the child)
- Article 8 (Protection and preservation of identity)
- Article 12 (Respect the views of the child)
- Article 19 (Protection from violence, abuse and neglect)
- Article 34 (Sexual exploitation)
- Article 36 (Other forms of exploitation)
- Article 41 (Respect for higher national standards)