



Handforth Grange Primary School

Code of Conduct For Staff

Policy Area	Leadership and Management
Policy Title	Code of Conduct for Staff
Policy Leader	Mrs A Booth
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*Promoting **Social Justice** through **Excellence in Education***

“Aim High, Shine Bright!”

INTRODUCTION

The governing body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teachers’ Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to current ‘Teachers’ Standards and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers’ Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

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 role models and 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. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by the school, including the Headteacher;

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- schools meals staff employed by Cheshire East Catering or by an external contractor, unless they are also employed by the school (see above);

SETTING AN EXAMPLE

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils 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 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).

Staff are made aware of the location of the school's Safeguarding Policy and Trusts 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.

HEALTH & SAFETY

All staff must read and adhere to the current Health and Safety risk assessments. Staff must take responsibility of their own personal hygiene routines as well as their classes to ensure that they are safeguarding themselves, pupils and colleagues. Staff should, where possible, ensure that their actions do not increase significantly the risk of them being exposed to COVID 19, such as visiting a relative known to have symptoms.

PUPIL/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students. Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students. Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

DRESS CODE

Staff should dress appropriately and in a professional manner which is conducive to the working environment of a school. Staff are asked to adopt smart professional dress appropriate to their position as an adult role model and also for the tasks they undertake as part of their work to inspire confidence in students, parents and the wider community. Staff should give consideration to the appropriateness of the length of shorts/tunics/skirts/dresses, thickness of fabric and cut of necklines to **ensure that they are not revealing in any way**. Staff should not wear any crop tops, no jeans, either blue or black, unless part of a residential or outdoor activity. Shoes should be sensible for working in a busy environment and be appropriate for use in specialist facilities. Health and Safety aspects and the ability to move quickly must be taken into consideration. Staff should wear appropriate footwear for the activity they are undertaking, for example, no open toe shoes/flip-flops should be worn when working in the kitchen, on the playground or hall at lunch, in addition, no heels or Flip Flops to be worn during the daily run. Any employee whose job involves working with machinery or working with food should follow the health and safety guidelines for that area.

HONESTY AND 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.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Trusts Whistleblowing procedure for schools. For further information see the Model Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on the Grid.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE 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.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and, specifically, social media sites. Social media refers to a number of online networking platforms such as:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- WordPress
- Blogger

Whilst the school recognises that employees make use of social media in a personal capacity, the employee's online profile must not contain the school's name, nor should it make any reference to the school or Frank Field Education Trust (FFET). In communications on social media in a personal capacity, employees should not:

- a) Criticise the school
- b) Criticise or argue with a colleague, pupil or a member of the pupil's family
- c) Make defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations
- d) Include posts that are inappropriate, for example, photographs of themselves or colleagues taken at work or on social functions or links
- e) Share or post links to inappropriate content
- f) Post any photograph of any pupils either within school or outside the school premises if this involves a school activity. This includes any employee that is also a parent of a child attending the school.
- g) Reveal any information owned by the school
- h) Reveal confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or child) or an organisation eg the school or the trust
- i) Breach copyright by using someone else's images or written content without their express permission
- j) Post any photos from official school sites on their personal site.

The school would advise strongly that if an employee is uncertain whether or not to post, comment or share on social media, that they should always err on the side of caution and not post.

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. Support staff graded above Grade 6, must have permission (reviewed annually) from their Headteacher before doing other paid work or being involved in a private business. Every employee (including teachers), at whatever level, who has another job or is involved in a business, must ensure that there is no conflict with their official duties.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or, its 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/student. This maintenance of confidentiality also applies to any confidential business relating to other employees and the operation of the school.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions that 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 or 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 Senior Person any information that gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must **never** promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil/student.

Reporting Concerns about Staff

At Handforth Grange Primary School we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school including directly employed staff, volunteers, and supply teachers, may harm children; that they may have;

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

These can include incidents outside of school, which do not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. Any concerns of this nature, about the conduct of other adults, should be taken to the Headteacher without delay or, where that is a concern about the Headteacher, to the Chief Operating Officer and the LADO.

Staff should be aware that this must be done on the same working day. The school will not internally investigate until instructed by the LADO (further details can be found in the Trusts Whistleblowing Policy 2023-24).

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and

contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes allegations which do not meet the harm threshold, also known as low level concerns:

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils.

Low level concerns will be reported in the same way as a concern in relation to concerns and allegations that meet the harms test i.e. to the Headteacher or Trust Chief Operating Officer, if the concern is about the head teacher. This must be done on the same day. Further details can be found in the FFET Whistleblowing Policy 2023-24 & Handforth Grange Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2023-24.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

“Intellectual property” means products of the mind, for example inventions, designs, trademarks, creative writings, programs and drawings (referred to in short as “inventions”). It will normally be the case that the ownership of all “inventions and the copyright of all written material created during work for the School/Trust, belong to the School/Trust.

USE OF EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Whilst we acknowledge that staff will need to have a mobile phone in school for personal use, these must be stored away in a safe place such as a cupboard or locker and only used to take or make personal calls when outside of the classroom in a private area of the school, such as a social area or office. Staff should ensure that their phones have a keypad lock to prevent other being able to access the phone without consent. Under no circumstances should staff use their phones to take photographs of children in school. When contacting parents, unless an emergency such as to report an injury when attending a sporting event, staff should only telephone parents from the school telephone system.

Employees should not carry out personal activities during working hours, nor mix private business with official duties. Official equipment and materials should not be used for general private purposes without prior permission from a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

It is not acceptable to use the school’s equipment and materials in the workplace in any of the following contexts:

1. Illegal activity
2. Activities for private gain
3. Personal shopping
4. Booking activities/holidays
5. Excessive personal messages

6. Playing games
7. Gambling
8. Political comment or campaigning
9. Personal communication to the media
10. Use of words or images that are offensive, distasteful or sexually explicit
11. Insulting, offensive, malicious or defamatory messages or behaviour
12. Harassment or bullying
13. Random searching of the web
14. Accessing sites which could be regarded as sexually explicit
15. Insulting, offensive, malicious or defamatory messages or behaviour
16. Harassment or bullying
17. Random searching of the web
18. Accessing sites which could be regarded as sexually explicit, pornographic, distasteful or offensive
19. Using message encryptions or anonymised web search, except where encryption is required for official school/Trust purposes
20. Racist, sexist or other conduct or messages which contravene the Trusts employment diversity policies
21. Actions which could embarrass the school or FFET or bring it into disrepute.

Employees should not download any 3rd party software onto any piece of ICT equipment without the express permission of a member of the SLT or ICT co-ordinator. When using school laptops at home this should be limited to completing school work.

DATA SECURITY

Staff members will be issued with an Office 365 account when starting the school. This account should be used to save all work related documents onto the server whilst employed by the school and an employee should not share their password with anyone other than a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the ICT Co-Ordinator. Should an employee need to use a USB stick, external hard drive or any other external data storage device to save their professional work, they must ensure it is encrypted and password protected and safely stored.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

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