

Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

*We are a caring Christian Community built on Compassion,
Trust, Friendship and Hope.*

Staff Code of Conduct and Safer Working Practices



Date of Policy:

January 2018

Date of Review:

January 2020

Adopted by Governing Body:

Signed by Chairman of Governors:

INTRODUCTION

As an employer, the Governing Body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees. All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

This code of conduct applies to all staff employed by the school.

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 in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards for all the pupils 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.

SAFER WORKING PRACTISES

This document seeks to raise awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. It should assist staff to monitor their own standards and practise and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them. It is also recognised that not all people who work with children work as paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by any person whose work brings them into contact with children.

It is recognised that the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. Achieving these aims is not always straightforward, as much relies on child and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. This document aims to reduce the risk of these.

It must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine as there are people who seek out, create or exploit opportunities to harm children. However, allegations may also be false or misplaced and may arise from differing perceptions of the same event. When they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and ensure that the adults working with them do so safely.

UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

-  The welfare of the child is paramount
-  Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
-  Staff 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
-  Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
-  Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
-  Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern

- 🏠 Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- 🏠 Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
- 🏠 Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the National College of Teaching & Leadership (NCTL).
- 🏠 Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed
- 🏠 Staff should be aware of and understand their establishment's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, whistle blowing procedure and their Local Safeguarding Children Board LSCB procedures.

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 demonstrate high standards of conduct and respect towards others, as well as encouraging our pupils to do the same.
- 🏠 Good levels of attendance and punctuality are essential. All staff must be punctual for all timetabled activities, including: lessons, meetings, assemblies and extra-curricular events.
- 🏠 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

physical abuse
 sexual abuse
 emotional abuse
 neglect

- 🏠 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- 🏠 This Policy must be read in conjunction with all other related Safeguarding Policies.
- 🏠 The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Denise Parker. The school's Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Rachael Skidmore.
- 🏠 Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure and it is important to make themselves familiar with these documents.
- 🏠 Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their families, or colleagues.

- 🏫 Staff must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- 🏫 Staff must act appropriately towards all children and young people whatever their background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or race.
- 🏫 Staff must address unlawful discrimination, bullying and stereotyping no matter who is the victim or the perpetrator.
- 🏫 Staff must not use their mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school technology.
- 🏫 Staff who are in contact with pupils should not use their mobile phones in school during their directed hours / paid hours of employment. Outside of these times, mobile phones should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present.

PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

- 🏫 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures in order to support the well-being and development of pupils and meet the professional standards for teaching relevant to their role.
- 🏫 Staff must give their full co-operation to colleagues and external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- 🏫 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.
- 🏫 We all thrive on encouragement and support, staff are extremely supportive of each other within our school and the atmosphere is positive. We expect everyone to find opportunities to praise, reward and encourage pupils as well as each other.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 🏫 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 🏫 Examination guidelines and specifications must be followed and respected by staff and pupils, so that we are compliant with regulations. Any instances of non-compliance must be reported to a member of the SLT immediately.
- 🏫 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Head Teacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents, or gifts of a promotional nature on the conclusion of any courtesy visit by a business or organisation of a sort normally given by that firm. If a member of staff is unsure of the suitability of a gift, they should check with the Head Teacher. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to pupils could be inappropriate and may be misinterpreted. Assurance should be sought from a member of the SLT prior to giving any gift.
- 🏫 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 advantages 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 school's Whistleblowing policy.
- 🏫 Declarations of interests. An employee is required to declare this where the group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school. Staff should consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school their relationship with any individual(s) or groups where this might cause a conflict with school activities.

ONE TO ONE SITUATIONS

Staff working in one to one situations with pupils at the setting, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

Staff should always:

- ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved

HOME VISITS

All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school or setting or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits such as visiting new Foundation Stage pupils before starting school or ensuring that a child is safe should they be absent from school.

Home visits must always be carried out with at least two members of staff and during the school day so that the Head Teacher is aware and permission has been given for the visit. At no point must a member of staff complete a home visit on their own.

In order to keep themselves safe, staff should always:

- avoid unannounced visits wherever possible
- ensure there is visual access to the exit
- always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure
- ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with the Head Teacher
- ensure that all visits are justified and recorded
- ensure that they are not exposed to unacceptable risk
- not enter a home if the parent/carer is absent unless in an emergency
- have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact

CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

-  Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation of the school, the employee's own reputation as a member of staff 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 regarded as unacceptable.
-  Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. (See relevant policies relating to online safety.)
-  Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.
-  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 affect an individual's work performance.

- 🏫 Staff must not attempt to make contact with parents or pupils outside of school for any reason unless this is a pre-existing friendship unrelated to school.

POST EMPLOYMENT DUTIES

- 🏫 The duty of fidelity which each employee owes to the school and which requires an employee to act in an honest fashion and not in a manner which will harm the school may, in certain respects, continue following the end of the employee's employment. For example, even though they are no longer employed by the school a former employee must not disclose confidential information which belongs to the school.
- 🏫 Certain employees may have access to intellectual property (such as copyright and materials which belong to the school). An employee might even have contributed to the creation of that intellectual property during a period of employment. However, where part or whole of that property belongs to the school it cannot be used by a former employee for any purpose without agreement of the school as appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- 🏫 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, they must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.
- 🏫 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedures. 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 Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer (Denise Parker) any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must **never** promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by them.

DRESS

- 🏫 All staff are required to wear Staff ID badge at all times.
- 🏫 Staff are expected to wear appropriate smart clothing in keeping with their role within school and the activities in which they are engaged (PE teachers, site staff and ICT network staff are some of the exceptions to wearing smart clothing). We require our students to wear uniform and the same principles of fitness for purpose should be reflected in staff dress. The Head Teacher's discretion over appropriateness will apply here.
- 🏫 Staff should also be aware of this with regard to their own choice of appearance, clothing and jewellery. Suitable smart clothing for male staff would include a suit/trousers, shirt & tie. Suitable clothing for female staff would include smart clothes that do not expose excess cleavage or leg. When teaching PE, suitable clothing would include loose fitting tracksuits and T-shirts.
- 🏫 Examples of clothing that are not suitable to wear include: denim of any colour, low cut tops and mini-skirts or shorts and skin tight sports clothing such as leggings.

SMOKING/ALCOHOL

Staff are not permitted to smoke on the school premises or grounds. Alcohol may not be consumed during working hours, including lunchtime and break time, other than at pre-authorized school events, as acknowledged by the Head Teacher.

USE OF CARS

For their own protection, staff should never give lifts to pupils without authorising it with a senior member of staff. Unless your insurance (business use) specifically covers this use, you may not take pupils in your car.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

COMPLAINTS

Please refer to our complaints policy.

APPENDIX 1 - Aide memoire for all staff

When we speak to others we will:

- 🏠 use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- 🏠 use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- 🏠 avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- 🏠 speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

As professionals we will:

- 🏠 avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration.
- 🏠 we all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- 🏠 maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- 🏠 work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- 🏠 work within the school's policies and practices, so that everything we do is consistent and has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- 🏠 treat everyone with respect.
- 🏠 dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.
- 🏠 behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.

APPENDIX 2 - from *Teachers' Standards Effective from 1 September 2012 (DfE)*

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
 - a) treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - b) having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - c) showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - d) not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - e) ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.