



Woodfield Primary School



(4) Staff Code of Conduct Read alongside RLT Code of Conduct

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| Date | September 2021 |
| Written by | Woodfield Primary School |
| Adopted by MAT Board | N/A |
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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School (Academy) staff have an influential position in the school, and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Woodfield Primary School staff have the children's safety as their first priority.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#)', we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy should be read in conjunction with 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' May 2019.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality

Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school

Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect

Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others

Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law

Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. Safeguarding/Whistleblowing

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our safeguarding policy and procedures, KCSIE, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available in the policy file. New staff will also sign for copies as part of their Induction.

A Whistleblowing Policy is in place, whereby staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussions. Staff are aware of their individual responsibilities to share matters of concerns with the SLT. Staff are also aware of other whistleblowing procedures e.g. NSPCC helpline.

5. Staff/pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

This takes place in a public place that others can access

Others can see in to the room

A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the Head Teacher.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety policy.

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

8. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information will never be:

Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority

Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others

Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is correct.

Staff should ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner and that they do not give or receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage, which might be misinterpreted.

Although staff should not give or receive gifts from pupils or parents on a regular basis or of any significant value, it is acceptable however for staff to receive small tokens of appreciation, such as at Christmas time.

Staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school; staff should ensure that gifts are declared if they are received.

Staff should generally only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system.

Where staff do give gifts, they should ensure that they are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

10. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. Staff should ensure that they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks that they undertake and that through their appearance, they promote a positive and professional image.

- Sportswear should only be worn when teaching PE
(Note: Staff are provided with PE hoodies which should be worn when teaching PE)
- No Jeans/Jeggings/Denim
- Leggings may be worn with long tops/dresses
- No trainers unless teaching PE
- No flip flops
- Where PPE/Uniform is provided this must be worn at all times e.g. Facilities Team/Midday Supervisors
- Please be mindful that your choice of shoe is at your own risk e.g. heels/open toe sandals.
We recommend you wear closed toe flat/low heeled shoes that support your foot.

As a rule, if you can see through it, up it or down it then it's not appropriate!

11. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

12. Use of School Time and Facilities

The School's property and facilities (e.g. stationery, computers, and photocopiers) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted.

13. Publication of Books/Articles

If staff want to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc. that they have written in connection with their duties and in which they describe themselves as holding an appointment with the school they must consult the Head Teacher, staff should speak to the Head Teacher if they wish to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc., which have been written in connection with their duties and their role within Woodfield Primary School.

14. Infatuations

In cases where a young person develops an infatuation, there is a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Staff should report to a senior colleague any clear/apparent indications (whether they are verbal, written or physical), that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with them and respond sensitively to such situations in order to maintain the dignity of all parties.

15. Social contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils to secure or strengthen a friendship. This includes giving any personal details to a pupil such as a home/mobile phone number, home or email address. Only in exceptional circumstances can this be with the prior approval of a senior member of staff

Do not give out personal details such as home/mobile numbers, home address or e-mail address to pupils.

Staff should always approve any planned social contact with pupils with senior colleagues, for example, when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme.

Staff should advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil, where it is apparent that it may give rise to a concern.

16. Physical contact

It is unrealistic to suggest that teachers should never touch pupils. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, such as when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance or as an integral part of some lessons such as PE and music (see also behaviour management, section 4.15).

However, innocent actions and appropriate physical contact can often be misconstrued and it is therefore crucial that staff only initiate physical contact for the minimum time necessary and in ways appropriate to their own role and the needs of the child.

Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Where a member of staff thinks that an incident could have been misinterpreted it should be reported to the Head Teacher.

Any formally agreed plan for children with SEND or physical disabilities should be understood and agreed by all concerned and staff should be provided with relevant information about vulnerable

pupils in their care where it is relevant for this to be provided in order for staff to be able to undertake tasks appropriately.

Extra caution may also be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Many such children are often needy and seek out inappropriate contact, thereby leading staff to be vulnerable to allegations of abuse. In this regard, staff should:

Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described;

Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent;

Always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take;

Look at alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret contact and consider involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in a demonstration;

Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights;

Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child and record any situations, where they think they may give rise to concern;

Adhere to the school's physical intervention and team teach policy and be acquainted with DfES Guidance in respect of physical contact with pupils and meeting the medical needs of children and young people in school.

17. Showers and Changing

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes.

However, there does need to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard young people and satisfy health and safety considerations. Any supervision must therefore be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned.

Staff should avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress or any visually intrusive behaviour where there are changing rooms;

Staff should announce their intention of entering a changing room and avoid remaining in the room unless pupil needs require it;

Staff should not change in the same place as or shower with children.

18. Behaviour management and physical intervention

Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools and physical force should never be used as a form of punishment; to do so is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

However, in some circumstances, staff in schools have the right to use physical intervention/reasonable force for the shortest period necessary to control or restrain pupils. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides the legal power for school staff to use reasonable force to prevent pupils from committing a crime or causing injury, damage or disruption.

Staff should try to defuse situations before they escalate;

Staff should keep parents informed of any sanctions;

Staff should adhere to Woodfield Primary School's policies on Behaviour and Inclusion and Positive Handling Policy;

Where it is identified that staff are likely to have to use physical intervention /positively handle pupils on a regular basis they should have received appropriate training.

19. Sexual contact with children and curriculum issues

It is a criminal offence for any adult in a position of trust to engage in any form of sexual activity with a young person under 18, even with their consent (Sexual Offences Act 2003). This also includes non-contact activities such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity.

There may be occasions when, as part of the curriculum, a teacher has to raise subject matter that is sexually explicit. In such situations, any lesson plan should highlight the areas of risk and sensitivity. Staff should respond to questions with careful judgement and avoid entering into inappropriate or offensive discussions about sexual activity. In this regard, staff should not:

Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature;

Pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school;

Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity;

Make sexual remarks to a pupil (including email, text messages, phone or letter), or use any communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative;

Discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of pupils;

Discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts;

Confer special attention and favour upon a child which might be misconstrued as being part of a 'grooming' process.

20. Transporting children

In such cases where children need to be transported between different locations, a designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all arrangements.

Wherever practicable, an adult additional to the driver should act as an escort and all arrangements agreed with relevant parties in advance. All staff:

Should avoid using private vehicles wherever possible;

Must ensure that they have the appropriate insurance (for business use) where they do have to use their private vehicle; should ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible;

Should be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer;

Should report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures;

Should ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety, taking into account any specific needs that the child may have.

21. Educational visits and after school clubs

Staff should always take care to have another adult present during out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff. Health and safety requirements should be strictly adhered to. Staff should ensure that they display professional behaviour during activities that take place off the school site and ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship. Staff should therefore maintain a professional relationship with pupils at all times. Where out of school activities include overnight stays, particular consideration should be given to sleeping arrangements, if applicable and pupils, staff and parents informed of the arrangements in advance. In this regard, staff should therefore: Undertake risk assessments; Have parental consent to the activity; Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.

22. First aid and administration of medication

In cases where first aid or medication needs to be administered, all staff should adhere to Woodfield Primary School's Medicines Policy. A health care plan should be drawn up in circumstances where the child needs to take regular medication and any such agreement between the child, parents/carers and the school must be negotiated, agreed and recorded. Where possible, children should be encouraged to administer the medication themselves, with the permission of parents. Staff should: Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken; Explain to the child what is happening.

23. Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required. A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children, including those with special needs, who require intimate care on a regular basis. In this regard staff should: Adhere to the school's intimate care guidelines; Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken; Explain to the child what is happening; Consult with colleagues where any variation from the agreed procedure or care plan is necessary and record the justification, sharing the information with parents. A detailed Intimate Care Policy has been produced for Woodfield Primary School which should be referred to for further detail.

24. Photography, videos and other creative arts

Many school activities involve recording images, but the use of such images needs careful consideration and handling. In particular, children who may have been abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography and filming.

The use of any images of children for publicity purposes will also require the appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Staff should therefore:

Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson or activity is concluded;

Ensure consent is gained from the pupil and their legal guardians where being used for publicity purposes (signatures displayed in reading diaries);

Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose;

Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability;

Be able to justify images of children in their possession;

Never use mobile phones to take images;

Avoid making images in one to one situations.

25. Internet use

Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the computer is illegal. Under no circumstances should adults in schools' access inappropriate images on the internet. The same rule applies to the use of the school's equipment by members of staff at home, e.g. use of laptops.

26. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the full governing board.

27. Covid 19 adhering to guidance

Please read alongside the Covid 19 Code of Conduct , in May 2021 Risk Assessment