



Dale Community Primary and Stonehill Nursery Federation

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

The Governing Body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees. Staff 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

This document has been developed 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 children within the school.

This document applies to all staff who are employed by the school, including the Head Teacher.

Professional behaviour

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct, which can be copied by children. This includes the use of inappropriate language around school; offensive language should be avoided at all times and in all areas of school.

All staff must therefore demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our children to do the same.

All staff must try to avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

These expectations help staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Safeguarding children

Staff have a duty to safeguard children from:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The duty to safeguard children includes the duty to report concerns about a child to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Head Teacher.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy are saved on the Staff Information server. 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 children under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Whistleblowing

Staff must raise concerns they have about safeguarding or child protection practices by following the Whistleblowing policy, which is stored on the policy server. An adult who 'whistleblows' or makes a public interest disclosure will have the protection of the relevant legislation.

Child development

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

Staff must cooperate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of children.

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

Honesty and integrity

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

Financial Inducements

Staff must familiarise themselves and comply with the school's financial regulations.

Staff must not accept any personal gifts, payments or other incentives from business contacts.

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.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. (Please refer to the school's Electronic Communications policy).

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 children or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the child.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a child is bullied by another child (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 school hours, including with the child'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 Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a child. Staff must **never** promise a child that they will not act on information that they are told by a child.

Attendance

Staff will make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.

If special leave is needed, staff will refer to the Staff Attendance and Leave of Absence policy.

If staff are absent from work they will phone the school Office and leave a message by 8am. If for any reason you are delayed in the morning, it is your responsibility to leave a message on the answer phone at the earliest possibility.

Mobile phones

Staff use of mobile phones during the working day should be discrete and appropriate i.e. not in the presence of children. When staff are working with children their phones must not be on their person.

Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents.

Personal mobile phones must not be used for taking photos of pupils.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Before photos of children are uploaded onto the school website or social media, e.g. Twitter, GDPR consent from parents must be checked.

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. In terms of safeguarding our first response is always to believe what we are told
 - Giving children time to express themselves at appropriate times
 - Consider 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 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 much 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 (Please refer to the Intimate Care Policy)
- 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 an emergency. We adopt the principal 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 maybe 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
- 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 that they may have about their child's learning, safety or well-being as long as it is conducted in an appropriate manner
- 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 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

- We recognise the right to confidentiality of all members of the school community
- Serious circumstances should be communicated to parents by a member of the SLT.

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:
 - Speaking politely and respectfully to one another
 - Communicating clearly and honestly with colleagues
 - Being flexible and understanding of necessary changes within the school day
 - Assuming that the actions of others are carried out in good faith
 - Addressing concerns openly and honestly and 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 to undertake to learn from those errors.

Appearance and dress

- We dress appropriately so that we set a good example for the children to show that we are here to work and that exhibits the importance of the job that we do
- We wear smart, practical clothes
- We avoid wearing clothes that could cause offence or embarrassment to others
- Blue denim is not considered acceptable, unless participating in a trip or visit that requires harder wearing clothes or during INSET days
- For reasons of Health and Safety 'flip flop' (back less) style shoes should not be worn
- When leading physical activities and/or PE lessons, we change into suitable clothing for that lesson (e.g. training shoes and appropriate sportswear)
- We do not wear excessive amounts of jewellery and understand our own Health and Safety responsibilities.
- Site staff will be provided with work wear
- Staff must wear their ID badge at all times.

Professional conduct

- Staff members should arrive in school at least five minutes before their contracted hours begin so that they are present in their area of work to start work at the designated time
- Staff are available at the end of the school day to meet with colleagues, parents and managers by mutual agreement
- We support and use the systems in place for monitoring who is on site and understand that these systems are for the Health and Safety of ourselves and others
- Agreed systems and initiatives are followed and actioned by all staff appropriate to their role in school. Any issues are raised with line managers.

Staff wellbeing

- Support will be given if a parent/carer has been abusive, aggressive, inappropriate etc. to a member of staff
- Support appropriate to individuals will be given if a member of staff has dealt with an incident of challenging behaviour with a child / Child protection issue / major incident
- Mediation support will be given if relationships with colleagues have broken down
- The Senior Leadership Team will be designated members of staff to provide and discuss appropriate support
- Time slots will be available with a counsellor if required. Please see the Head teacher if you require one of these time slots.

If you feel a member of staff is not abiding by this code of conduct please express your concerns to your line manager.