



Woodmancote School

Code of Conduct for Employees

Date of Policy: March 2017

Responsibility of: The Governing Body of Woodmancote School

Our aims and objectives

- To create a happy community in a safe, open, friendly and secure environment where every individual feels that they belong and are aspirational
- To foster in every child the characteristics of effective learning - curiosity; independent thinking and reasoning; ability to apply knowledge and skills; enjoyment and fascination; imagination and creativity; ability to reflect; without fear of making mistakes
- To develop an outstanding curriculum which enthuses and stimulates and which responds to the particular needs of our pupils
- To provide memorable opportunities to extend and enhance pupils' learning
- To encourage every child to develop socially and to achieve academically
- To be committed to outstanding teaching that enthuses staff and children
- To instil spiritual and moral values in every child and an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of British culture, encouraging self-respect, respect for themselves, others and the environment so that they participate fully in life in modern Britain and make a valuable contribution, always remaining tolerant of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- To promote and model excellent behaviour where everyone understands the consequences of their actions
- To develop in every child a willingness to participate in, and respond to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities
- To communicate clearly with staff, pupils, governors and parents ensuring that everyone works effectively as a team
- To ensure that all children are fully prepared to take the next steps in their education and to be fully prepared to take their part in modern society



1. INTRODUCTION

The public is entitled to have trust and confidence in the integrity of Woodmancote School Community, its staff, governors and volunteers. The conduct of all must therefore be of the highest standard. This Code of Conduct has been prepared to help employees and volunteers on issues of conduct by providing a framework of guidelines.

All adults working at the school must all act with utmost good faith with regard to the business of the School, and do all in their power to promote the School's interests and not do anything which may adversely affect the School's reputation.

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 should be read in conjunction with DfE 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418687/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_part_1_only.pdf

Teaching Staff

All teaching staff who are employed under the Teachers' Terms & Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to be GTC registered and must adhere to the Teacher Standards:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283566/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

2. 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 sets a good example to all the pupils within the school.

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:

- Peripatetic staff who are centrally employed by the LA;
- Schools meals staff employed by an external contractor;
- 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)

3. SETTING AN EXAMPLE

- All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils.
- 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.

4. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

Staff have a duty to safeguard PUPILS from:

- **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.
- These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

- **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
 - **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
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- The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/ to the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL) for Child Protection.
 - The school's DSL is Headteacher -Mr Gary Tucker and in his absence the Deputy DSO is Mrs Sarah Badham. In the absence of either of these two people, MR Hoyle, Mrs Greening and Mr Evans have received relevant training to act in their absence.
 - Staff are provided with copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents. These documents can be found in the staffroom.
 - Staff must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
 - Staff must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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, particularly Social Media, 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.

8. 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.
- 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 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 DSL 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 the pupil.

9. 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 Headteacher 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.
- 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:
 - 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

10. STAFF DRESS

- We dress in a manner 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.
- Jeans are not considered acceptable, unless participating in a trip or visit that requires harder wearing clothes (e.g. residential trips).
- When leading physical activities and/or PE lessons (including Sports Day), we change into suitable clothing for that lesson (e.g. training shoes and track-suit).
- We do not wear excessive amounts of jewellery and understand our own Health and Safety responsibilities.

11. USE OF MOBILE DEVICES

The school recognises that the wide range of rapidly developing communications technologies has the potential to enhance learning. The following table shows how the school currently considers the benefit of using these technologies for education outweighs their risks / disadvantages. It should be noted that failure to adopt this protocol may result in disciplinary action being undertaken.

Communication Technologies	Staff & other adults			
	Allowed	Allowed at certain times	Allowed for selected staff	Not allowed
Mobile phones may be brought to school	✓			
Use of mobile phones in lessons				✓
Use of mobile phones in break / lunch times	✓			
Use of mobile phones when on playground duty				✓
Use of mobile phones during staff meetings / INSET* (All mobile phones to be kept on silent or turned off prior to the start of any meeting; where possible the phone should be kept out of view so that meetings are not disturbed)		✓		
Taking photos on mobile phones or other camera devices				✓
Use of hand held devices eg PDAs, PSP	✓			
Use of personal email addresses in school, or on school network		✓		
Use of school email for personal emails	✓			
Use of chat rooms / facilities				✓
Use of instant messaging		✓		
Use of social networking sites				✓
Use of blogs	✓			

12. OTHER AREAS

- Members of teaching staff arrive in school by 8.30am and should remain on site until 4:00pm unless they have a pre-arranged appointment or where they are undertaking school business. In cases such as these, agreement should be sought with either the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. Non-teaching staff are governed by the terms and conditions as stated within their contracts.
- If for any reason we are delayed in the morning, it is our responsibility to ensure that the appropriate person in school is informed at the earliest opportunity.
- Teachers should be available after the end of the school day to meet with colleagues, parents and managers.
- 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.

APPENDIX

Code of Conduct – Aide Memoire

Aims:

- To create and maintain a shared understanding of how we all should behave towards one another.
- To express our shared commitment to promoting lifelong learning through respect for all.
- To provide clear, unambiguous guidance for members of staff about the standards of conduct that are expected of them.
- To provide a reference point for school leaders and managers.
- To contribute to a school culture that explicitly supports the school's values.

We understand that we are part of a professional organisation. When we come to work or take part in off-site work activities, this commits us to the following:

- Taking professional responsibility for fulfilling my role in the school.
- Being a positive role model (dress, talk and act).
- Being an effective team member; acknowledging the voice and contributions of each other and offering and receiving support where needed.
- Being positive in my thinking and approach (constructive not destructive, seeking solutions and having a go).
- Adhering to deadlines and keeping to time.
- De-personalising issues (focus on solving the issue).
- Communicating effectively, clearly, honestly and transparently with all stakeholders.
- Demonstrating fairness and consistency.
- Showing appreciation (taking time to thank and acknowledge the contributions of others).
- Respecting the environment and each other (taking shared ownership of our school).

Applicable to:

- All employees, parent helpers and outside agencies that work within our school.

The policy was approved by the Governing Body in May 2017.

Date of Review: March 2018