



Christchurch Infant School

CODE OF CONDUCT

Adopted by the Governing Body:	March 2022
To Be Reviewed:	March 2023

The code of conduct determines how we behave to the children, one another, and what we expect of each other to ensure happiness, success and achievement.

The procedures in this code of conduct are intended to help with the smooth, efficient and safe running of the school, which is vital in providing a secure environment for teaching and learning to take place.

To be read in conjunction with the national guidance: 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings - October 2015'.

1. Definition

1.1. References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the document apply to professional behaviours towards all pupils, including those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean **any pupil** at the education establishment.

1.2. References made to adults and staff refer to all those who work with children in an educational establishment, in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

1.3. The term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

2. Introduction

2.1. Schools have a legal duty to create and maintain a safe learning environment for children. A staff Code of Conduct is a **mandatory** requirement as described in the DfE statutory guidance: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021' (paragraph 7).

2.2. The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in our care. The following code draws together existing laws, regulations and conditions of service designed to protect the interests of staff and volunteers and the children with whom they work and this has been agreed following consultation with recognised trade unions and is recommended for adoption.

2.3. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this code could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

3. Purpose and Scope

3.1. All staff and volunteers working in a school setting have a legal and moral duty to keep children safe and protect them from harm. Staff should ensure they do not put themselves in situations in which allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour could be made.

3.2. This code applies to all adults working in schools whatever their position, role or responsibilities.

3.3. All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding, which should be explained as part of staff induction and through regular staff training.

3.4. The code should be read in conjunction with the relevant statutory and other guidance documents issued nationally or by the DfE and Home Office as well as other related school policies (see **Appendix 1** of this policy).

3.5. This code cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to show the standard expected of staff but it does not replace the general requirements of the law.

3.6. 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 code, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct which this code supplements.

3.7. 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 code aims to reduce the risk of that.

4. Core Principles

4.1. The welfare of the children is paramount.

4.2. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should seek to avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.

4.3. Staff should dress appropriately at all times for the tasks they undertake and ensure they promote a positive and professional image.

4.4. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.

4.5. Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or substances, including prescribed medication that may affect their ability to care for children.

4.6. 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).

4.7. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed and should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

4.8. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident which may give rise to concern.

4.9. Records should be made of any incident and decision made or where further actions have been agreed, in accordance with school policies and confidentiality.

4.10. All staff should know the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and be familiar with local child protection arrangements, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, whistleblowing procedures and their Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.

4.11. Staff should be aware of and comply with the school's financial and administrative regulations and any other procedure manuals.

5. Conduct and Behaviour

5.1. All staff who work in a school setting are in a position of trust in relation to individuals in their care and so must adopt high standards of personal integrity and conduct and behave in such a way that does not compromise their position both within and outside of the workplace or the safety and/or welfare of children and young people.

5.2. Staff should be aware that it is a criminal offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003: abuse of a position of trust) to engage in sexual activity with a pupil under the age of 18.

5.3. Teachers are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct in accordance with the minimum professional Teaching Standards.

5.4. Staff should never make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional comments or use physical force as a form of punishment.

5.5. Staff should always adhere to all of the school's policies and risk assessments.

5.6. Observe confidentiality in the sharing of information regarding all stakeholders. Staff should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit. Nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

5.7. Maintain professional and respectful lines of communication with colleagues, parents and pupils at all times in accordance with the school's Communication Policy.

5.8. Staff should keep the school informed about personal matters, such as absence/illness that affect their role within the workplace.

6. Equality Issues

6.1. All staff should adhere to the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, in addition to the requirements of the law.

6.2. All adults and children at the school have a right to be treated at all times with fairness, equality and without discrimination.

7. Employment Matters

7.1. All staff involved in recruitment and selection processes should ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit, without discrimination and in accordance with the school's recruitment and selection policy and procedure.

7.2. Any staff involved in tendering processes should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit.

7.3. No member of staff should be involved in any appointment or decision relating to discipline, promotion, or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they are in a close personal relationship.

7.4. All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, should be made known to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors (if the Headteacher).

8. Public Duty and Private Interest

8.1. Staff should not put themselves in a position where their duty to the school and their private interests conflict.

9. Other Employment/Private Work

9.1. Any external work undertaken must not bring the school into disrepute or conflict with the school's interest.

9.2 Any copyright created by a member of staff during their employment with the school becomes the property of the school.

10. Safeguarding

10.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

10.2. The duty to safeguard children and young people includes the duty to report child welfare concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL),

10.3. Staff should be aware of and adopt the recommended procedures and best practice guidance outlined in the national [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings \(October 2015\)](#).

10.4. Staff should be aware of and follow the statutory responsibilities outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

10.5. Staff should be aware of the risks to children from radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism as outlined in the [Prevent Duty](#) guidance.

- **Guidance for Safer Working Practice**

- (i) This document will be used to support the Code of Conduct and as such may be referred to in any disciplinary proceedings.
- (ii) Staff should read this document in conjunction with this code.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
 - (i) This document sets out the statutory duties schools must follow and includes guidance on mandatory reporting requirements. It is advised that this is read alongside **Working Together to Safeguard Children**.
 - (ii) Staff should ensure they understand and are familiar with their responsibilities and where this includes mandatory reporting expectations they understand their role any locally agreed procedures for reporting, such as informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
 - (iii) Staff should be aware of the personal reporting duty with regard to known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM). Supplementary to Keeping Children Safe in Education, staff can obtain further guidance in the **'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information'** document.
 - (iv) Staff should refer any concerns about another member of staff to the Headteacher, or if the concern is about the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors or equivalent.
 - (v) Staff should raise concerns of poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in safeguarding, using the school's whistleblowing policy.
- **Prevent Duty**
 - (i) Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, staff must have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'
 - (ii) Staff should refer any concerns regarding radicalisation to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or a senior member of staff, following the school's normal safeguarding procedures.
 - (iii) Relevant staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme, a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.
 - (iv) Staff should ensure they have undertaken some form of Prevent awareness training

11. Financial inducements, gifts, hospitality and sponsorship

11.1. Staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school

11.2. Staff should ensure that gifts are declared if they are received.

11.3. Where staff provide gifts they should ensure they are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

12. Use of School Time and Facilities

12.1. Head of school is the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is absent from school, the Deputy Headteacher automatically becomes head of school. If the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher are both absent from school at the same time, the next most senior staff member becomes the head of school, e.g. Assistant Headteacher. The head of school will always be someone from the Senior Leadership Team.

12.2 All teaching staff are required to be on site at least 10 minutes before the morning session and are to be available for 30 minutes after the close of the afternoon session unless attending a course or meeting. This is for safeguarding information reasons.

12.3. All staff are required to log in and out using the electronic card system. If you have forgotten your ID card, please sign in manually in the school foyer.

12.4. There is an expectation that appointments, e.g. doctors, dentists and hospital are made outside of school hours, during PPA wherever possible.

12.5. Planned absences for attending interviews and such other professional matters, will be subject to approval by the Headteacher. Requests for all other leave, must initially be discussed with the Headteacher, who may direct to seek permission from the governing body. Leave without pay may be granted in certain circumstances.

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

13. Publication of Books/Articles

13.1. Staff must consult with the Headteacher before publishing book, articles, letters, dissertations etc where they are described as holding an appointment at the school.

14. Disciplinary Action

14.1. All staff should be aware that a failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

15. Dress and Appearance

15.1 Staff should ensure that they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks that they undertake and that they promote a positive and professional image, as a role model. This includes when working with children, meeting parents and external agencies.

15.2 This dress codes exists in school and should not discriminate in any way:

Dress Code

- Teachers, Administrative/support staff, Teaching Assistants and work experience students should wear 'smart casual' clothing (no blue denim jeans or tracksuits). This does not apply to caretakers, cleaners or lunchtime supervisors, but they should

wear clothing suitable for the tasks that they are expected to carry out whilst at school (ie safe and practical footwear).

- When carrying out PE activities, appropriate clothing, such as tracksuits, should be worn. It is acceptable for these clothes to be worn for the duration of the working day.
- For PE, sensible and appropriate footwear should be worn where the teacher can model effective practice. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum and covered where possible. PE clothing such as tracksuits can be worn when you have PE on that day.
- Jewellery should be discrete and kept to a minimum on health and safety grounds.
- For school trips staff can wear their choice of 'suitable clothing and footwear' for the day.
- No large logos for any part of the week where children are present. No slogans that promote personal political opinion or derogatory comments that may cause offence for any part of the working week, including non-uniform and INSET days.
- Clothing should not be too revealing (ie: midriffs, lower backs, cleavage etc should be covered) Dresses and skirts should also not be too revealing making sitting down and bending over embarrassing and unprofessional.
- High heeled shoes, especially stilettos should not be worn by staff in classes or outdoor areas with children for your own safety and that of the children.
- No inappropriate footwear e.g. flip flops or sandals with no heel support, which may contravene Health & Safety guidelines. It is the responsibility of all employees to wear footwear suitable for the duties undertaken. Footwear should be of a 'sensible' nature and worn appropriately.
- Safety items, such as fluorescent tabards, gloves etc should be worn as directed with regards to Health and Safety.
- Tattoos should be discreet. Anyone who has a visible tattoo which could be construed as offensive to any religion or belief, or is in any way discriminatory, violent or intimidating, will compromise their employment or placement at the school. Likewise, an existing member of staff who becomes tattooed in this way may, after investigation, become subject to disciplinary proceedings.
- Staff are required to adopt a 'common sense' approach with regard to the clothing, jewellery, glasses etc. that they wear to work in terms of expense. Staff must ensure that articles are appropriate to the type of work that they carry out and also be mindful of any potential for damage to/loss of personal property which may arise as a result of carrying out their duties. The school discourages staff from coming to work in overly expensive or 'designer' items and where employees choose to do so and subsequently make a claim for damage to/loss of such items, the Governors reserve the right to impose an upper limit of the amount of compensation it reimburses.
- Identification badges must be worn on the school site.
- The requirements of particular faiths to wear specific types of clothing or to dress modestly will be respected so long as the item of clothing does not pose a hazard to the health and safety of employees or contravene any reasonable and legitimate requirements of the School.

On INSET days and days when the school is closed staff wear their own choice of clothes and footwear at their own risk.

16. Work Life Balance

16.1. All staff are encouraged to consider their own work life balance. If you need support in this area, please discuss with your line manager, Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher. As a school we are always willing to provide time to staff and access to confidential counselling services if required.

APPENDIX 1

POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED AND READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT (Listed in alphabetical order)

Policy/Procedure/Guidance
Allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers
Child Protection Policy**
Data Protection Policy
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Drugs and Alcohol Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Online Safety
Communications Policy
Supervision Policy
<u>Guidance for Safer Working Practice</u> * national guidance for those working with children and young people in Education Settings.
Health and Safety Policy
Intimate Care
Keeping Children Safe in Education*- DfE statutory guidance
Mandatory Reporting of <u>Female Genital Mutilation procedural information</u> *
Use of Positive Force
<u>Prevent Duty Guidance</u> *
Recruitment and Selection Policy
School Record Keeping Policy
Whistleblowing Policy

*It is expected that staff will adhere to the statutory duties and/or best practice outlined within these documents as applicable to their role and responsibilities.

**The Child Protection Policy is available from the Safeguarding and Standards Team. Please contact sasteam@dorsetcc.gcsx.gov.uk for further details.

