

Staff Code of Conduct for Employees at Netherbrook Primary School



Date of last review:	September 2021
Date of next review:	September 2022

1 INTRODUCTION

The governing body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees. The following code has been negotiated with trade unions and is recommended for adoption by the governing body.

In addition to this policy, 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.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

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 role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students 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.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by the school, including the Headteacher;
- all staff in units or bases that are attached to the school.

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- peripatetic staff who are centrally employed by the LA;
- schools meals staff employed by Dudley Catering or 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 but are expected to conduct themselves in the correct professional manner whilst working at the school.

3 SETTING AN EXAMPLE

- 3.1 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**. Even when pupils are not thought to be in the building.
- 3.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.
- 3.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 3.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

4 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS

- 4.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:
- physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - neglect
- 4.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) for Child Protection.
- 4.3 The school's DSL is **The Headteacher. Name: Phil Rawlings**
- 4.4 Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.
- 4.5 Staff must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- 4.6 Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

5 PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.
- 5.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.
- 5.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

6 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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 advantage 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 Whistleblowing procedure for schools. For further information see the Model Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on the Grid.
- 6.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

7 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- 7.3 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

8 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 8.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students 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.
- 8.2 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 pupils 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.
- 8.3 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 pupil. Staff must **never** promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

9 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

10 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 an 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

11 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

12 OTHER AREAS

- Members of teaching staff arrive in school by 8.30am and must not leave until 3.30pm unless approved by the Headteacher directly.
- Other staff members arrive in school in good time to begin their contracted hours
- Lunchtime (break) for all staff is 30 minutes
- 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 are 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.

13 LONE WORKING

- Any staff working in the mobiles beyond 6.00pm should bring work into the main building.
- Staff should notify the site managers of the time they expect to leave and if they need to carry out any duties involving increased risk. I.e. finishing a display, cleaning out a fish tank or preparing a cooking lesson involving knives etc.
- If other groups are using the school facilities (E.g. Brownies) the internal fobbed and coded doors should always be shut and activated - if these groups need access to other parts of the building this should be done with the express consent of the site managers/SLT.
- Staff should ensure that they do not carry out any activities involved in working at height (e.g. using small 2 step ladders) if working alone.
- Staff should complete a risk assessment for any one off specific tasks that may constitute a risk for a lone worker.
- Staff working alone on site should have a mobile phone with them at all times.
- All standard school policies and procedures linked to Health and Safety and staff conduct should be adhered to at all times.
- Staff should not bring visitors on to the site without the consent of the Site Manager or Headteacher and these visitors must sign in. (E.g. partners etc) Staff members are responsible for the conduct of visitors that they bring on to the school site. No visitors should be allowed on site during school hours when pupils are in lessons and should never be left unaccompanied.
- Staff accessing the building outside of normal school hours (E.g. holidays) should notify the Senior Site Manager(s) via text/phone call and should sign in using the electronic system even if only visiting for a few minutes.
- If hazardous or dangerous equipment is to be used alone then a Risk Assessment should be carried out in advance and line manager should be notified prior to use and after it is finished.
- Staff should ensure that they leave the site secure whilst working alone.
- Site staff should be aware of staff working in isolated locations within the building during none school hours.

Unhelpful Behaviours

- Rudeness
- Moodiness
- Not willing to have a go
- Being stuck in a rut
- Only Sticking to Cliques
- Treating special 'friends' differently
- Laziness
- Deliberately distracting behaviours
- Abruptness
- Untidiness
- Bad manners

- Always expecting something to be done straight away – don't assume yours is the only issue

Helpful Behaviours

- Acknowledgement
- Hearing not just listening
- Courtesy
- Tolerance
- Patience
- Inspirational
- Getting to the point
- Calmness
- Having a go
- Confidence to take a risk
- Not being frightened to make mistakes
- Good manners
- Dealing with issues – not brushing them under the carpet
- Being prepared to take/make decisions
- Positive relationships among staff help to feel more confident and more effective in our work together
- Involve people in the decision making process
- Stick to the agenda
- Listen to the views of everyone
- Give clear reasoning for decisions
- Commitment
- Honesty
- Willingness
- Helpfulness
- Eye contact
- Smiling
- Keep to times
- Good punctuality
- Empathy
- Humour
- Follow actions through
- Being available