



COOMBE HILL INFANTS' SCHOOL

Code of Conduct

Keep this document for your reference

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 upon them. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example and acts as a role model to all the pupils within the school.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- All staff who are employed by the school, including the Head Teacher;
- All staff in extended services provided by the school.

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff who are centrally employed by the LA;
- Cleaning staff employed through a third party and working in the school;

While some parts of the policy below can legitimately only refer to employees in the school, all volunteers are expected to follow the ethos of the school and keep the code of conduct in mind at all times. Those volunteers who fail to do so will be asked to leave the premises.

SETTING AN EXAMPLE

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school or the Local Authority into disrepute.

All staff who work in schools provide a role model for 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. For example, we are on time to classes and also to break and lunchtime duties. We should always present a positive and cheerful demeanour in the presence of children, parents and other staff members. If there is cause for distress, this should be discussed with your manager, away from the view of children, so that a decision can be made about how you can be best supported.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

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 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.

STAFF DRESS CODE

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff and volunteers should recognise that they are role models to the children and their choice of dress should uphold the school's expectations for the children. Staff and volunteers must ensure they are dressed decently, safely, cleanly and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option here, it is hoped that staff will dress in a way that reflects a professional appearance. The wearing of casual items such as jeans, shorts, football team clothing or items of clothing that could be deemed by others as too revealing should be avoided and tattoos should be covered. When a member of staff is taking PE, they may wish to change into appropriate PE clothes or trainers.

Visitors will be issued a lanyard when signing into the school.

CONFIDENTIALITY, INTEGRITY AND SECURITY

We expect staff to have an awareness and high regard for the confidential, sensitive and important nature of their role and will be mindful of this at all times including formal and informal discussions with parents, other members of staff, children and the wider school community. Particular attention should be paid in public areas of the school such as corridors, the playground and outside areas.

A "needs to know" approach should be adopted to safeguard this principle and to ensure no child or group of children is unfairly stereotyped or unnecessarily spotlighted. Where possible no names should be explicitly mentioned whether for positive, negative or information purposes in public areas, unless it is on a needs to know basis for all present to hear.

Confidential information about pupils must be held securely. Confidential information about pupils must not be held off the school site other than on security protected school/Connections Club equipment.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTACT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND ABUSE OF TRUST

There are occasions when offending adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child or young person, and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff and volunteers should be aware that conferring special attention without good reason or favouring a pupil has the potential to be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

Any sexual behaviour, whether homosexual or heterosexual, by a member of staff, volunteer or outside agent with or towards a child or young person is illegal.

GIFTS

It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. Staff must take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. Items to the value of £30 or more should be disclosed to the School Business Manager, who updates her record accordingly. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a pupil should be consistent with school policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.

SOCIAL CONTACT AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking sites and blogging are extremely popular. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct or disciplinary action.

Staff in school should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. This includes social networking and blogging. Even if a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response and be aware that such social contact in person, by phone or on the internet could be misconstrued and may place the member of staff in a very vulnerable position.

Staff and volunteers must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.

Staff must only use their mobile phones during their breaks and out of sight of children. Staff must store their mobile phones out of sight of children when working to ensure that they cannot be accessed by any children.

A school phone is available for use on trips, photographing pupils for the newsletter and emergencies. This is available from the main office.

INTERNET USE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The school has a separate policy on internet use, electronic communication and security which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be considered a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people.

Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises.

DATA PROTECTION

All staff will read and follow the school's Data Protection Policy. They will follow this policy to ensure that people's personal data (pupil health records, addresses, behaviour details, etc) is kept confidential and locked away. Any data breach must be reported to the School's Data Protection Officer, who is currently Elaine Bather. A lockable cupboard is available in the Office for confidential paper copies, though, where possible, data should be held electronically.

Any data about pupils which is to be kept by the school (for only the first two years after departure) should not be held by staff but must be held centrally by the school (cases should be discussed with the DPO). The exception for this is a sample of evidence exercise books (in anticipation of inspection) which will be held by the Year Group Leaders.

PHYSICAL CONTACT AND PERSONAL PRIVACY

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different pupil.

Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff or volunteer believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported.

ALCOHOL AND SMOKING

No alcohol is to be supplied or consumed on school premises apart from the following circumstances:-

- Permission has been given by the Head teacher or Governing Body
- All children are off site and an agreed one off celebration has been arranged

- Any PTA event where alcohol is supplied must be accompanied by a licence

The Coombe Hill site is a non-smoking zone. Staff wishing to smoke need to smoke discreetly off site and not in view of the pupils or parents. This includes E-cigarettes.

STAFF WITH CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOL

We recognise that working at the same school as your child can result in some difficulties. It is advised that children are told that they need to distinguish between the parent when they are and are not on duty and that in school they cannot be a focal point for their child's concern. In the event that there is a concern with regards to your child and that you need to speak to their class teacher or another member of staff, please arrange a mutually convenient time, being mindful of staff's need to prepare lessons, have a break etc.

It is possible that parents of other children may wish to discuss with you internal matters of the school, for example, when a member of staff is leaving or who their child will have as a teacher next year. To avoid any breach of confidentiality, it is important to reinforce that you are unable to comment on such matters. Similarly, it would be unacceptable to make, suggest or agree with any negative comments about a member of staff or the school, or say anything which could bring the school into disrepute..

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

With pupils:

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish or undermine a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. When speaking to pupils, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves. Shouting aggressively is not acceptable in any situation. Should children seek to act in a disrespectful or aggravating manner we expect staff to act professionally, calmly and authoritatively as befits a member of the Coombe Hill Infants staff.

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:

- We focus on the children, their experiences and learning while we are in Connections Club, which means, as far as possible, we leave our personal issues at home;
- We speak politely to one another;
- We are approachable, friendly and welcoming to other adults in Connections Club and school – both staff members and visitors;
- We are flexible and understanding of unexpected changes within the session;

- We communicate clearly and honestly;
- We address our concern openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone or talking about them behind their back;
- We never act in a way that publicly undermines a colleague or make speculations about their life in or out of Connections Club or school;
- 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 never deliberately discriminate against or ostracise individuals or groups of staff;
- We avoid the establishment of 'cliques' within the staff body;
- We support the professional development of all colleagues.