



Oldfield Park Junior School

Code of Conduct for Staff, Governors, Students and Volunteers Policy

	Date	Author(s)	Notes
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Governor: Katie Payne

This policy to be reviewed in Term 1 2019-20

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This document has drawn guidance and recommendations from the 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' October 2015.

Introduction

The governing body of Oldfield Park Junior School will foster a culture of the highest professional standards. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected and the duty upon staff, volunteers and governors to abide by it. All staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to keep pupils and themselves safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by adults that demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement. Following this Code of Conduct will help to safeguard staff, governors and volunteers from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to pupils.

Staff, governors and volunteers must feel able to raise issues of concern and everyone must fully recognise the duty to do so, particularly in terms of child protection. A member of staff who, in good faith, 'whistle blows' or makes a public interest disclosure will have the protection of the relevant legislation

This Code of Conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable in relation to pupils. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the pupil where no specific guidance has been given. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge.

All teachers must by law be registered with the Department for Education.

The document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' reviewed by the Department for Education in September 2018, is the key statutory document for safeguarding in schools and colleges.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)' covers five main areas:

- Part One: Safeguarding information for all staff
- Part Two: The management of safeguarding
- Part Three: Safer recruitment
- Part Four: Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff
- Part Five: Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

This document has drawn guidance and recommendations from the 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' October 2015.

This Code of Conduct forms part of the school's disciplinary rules for staff. A serious breach of the Code will be regarded as gross misconduct. A less serious breach may result in a disciplinary warning.

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, the governing body will follow the guidance set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2018) published by the Department for Education in September 2018. This guidance is about managing allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used where it is alleged that a member of staff or a volunteer or a governor 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 s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Principles of Professional Practice

All staff, governors and volunteers as appropriate to the role and/or job description of the individual, must:

- place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice;
- have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances;
- treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously and value diversity and individuality;
- model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including a thirst for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience, and a genuine concern for other people;
- respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education;
- seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and co-operation to support the young person's learning and well-being in and out of school; and
- reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues.

Power and positions of trust and authority

Staff should not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment;
- use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils; and
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.

Confidentiality

All staff must know the name of their Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) Lead (HT Dave Goucher, DHT Julie Butler and Rachael Van Roy)) and be familiar with the CP and Safeguarding Policy.

Members of staff and governors may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances the information may be highly sensitive. Confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family must never be disclosed to anyone other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay to those with designated pupil protection responsibilities.

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 equipment. Information must only be stored for the length of time necessary to discharge the task for which it is required.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about the storage of sharing of information s/he must seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries must be passed to senior management.

Standards of behaviour

Staff should not:

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or to act as an appropriate role model
- make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a pupil
- use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils
- discuss their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils
- make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such

Staff should:

- be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they share a household, or others in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children

Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance should:

- promote a positive and professional image;
- is appropriate for their role;
- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative;
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding;
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans;
- is not considered to be discriminatory; and
- is compliant with professional standards.

Gifts

It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. Staff need to 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/carers wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, 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 the school's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

To enable children to access the curriculum or extra-curricular activities there may be occasions when equipment, not a gift, is provided to a child. This equipment may take the form of shin pads, uniform, socks, house t-shirts, boots etc. and will often come from existing stock or lost property. In this occurrence the member of staff must clear this with one of the DSLs or SLT and log it in the book noting date, name of child, item and be countersigned by all involved.

Infatuations and Crushes

Adults must recognise that a pupil may be strongly attracted to a member of staff or volunteer and/or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. A member of staff or volunteer, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with him/herself or a colleague, must report this without delay to a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. The situation will be taken seriously and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the pupil. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations. Whilst the risk of infatuation is not limited to younger members of staff, newly qualified teachers must recognise their particular vulnerability to adolescent infatuation.

Examples of situations which must be reported are given below:

- where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that he or she might be developing a relationship with a pupil which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust;
- where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that a pupil is becoming attracted to him or her or that there is a developing attachment or dependency;
- where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that actions or words have been misunderstood or misconstrued by a pupil such that an abuse of trust might be wrongly suspected by others; and
- where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about the apparent development of a relationship by another member of staff or volunteer, or receives information about such a relationship.

Social Contact/Networking outside the workplace

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 through social networking sites. Even if a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement 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 should advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern

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.

The school phone should be taken on all trips and activities so as to avoid any chance of a staff members' mobile phones being used and numbers shared.

Staff should:

- always approve any planned social contact with pupils or parents with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme
- advise SLT/DSL of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern;
- refrain from sending personal communication to pupils or parents unless agreed with DSL;
- inform DSL of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship such as requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring.

Communication with children (including the use of technology)

Adults at OPJS should:

- not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work;
- not give out their personal details;
- use only equipment and Internet services provided by the school or setting;
- follow the school's Acceptable Use policy;
- ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute.

Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

Staff should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described;
- never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent;
- always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny;
- never indulge in horseplay or fun fights;
- always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently;

- ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil;
- establish the preferences of pupils;
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact;
- always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take;
- report and record situations which may give rise to concern; and
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games or who provide music tuition will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff with a job description which includes intimate care duties will have appropriate training and written guidance. No other member of staff or volunteer should be involved in intimate care duties except in an emergency. Two members of staff must be present when carrying out intimate care duties.

Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

Staff should:

- not use force as a form of punishment;
- try to defuse situations before they escalate e.g. by distraction;
- keep parents informed of any sanctions or behaviour management techniques used
- be mindful of and sensitive to factors both inside and outside of the school or setting which may impact on a pupil's behaviour;
- follow the school's behaviour management policy;
- behave as a role model;
- avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation;
- refer and adopt the school's Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) policy if the situation arises;
- be aware of the legislation and potential risks associated with the use of isolation and seclusion; and
- comply with legislation and guidance in relation to human rights and restriction of liberty.

Sexual Contact

This means that staff should:

- not have any form of sexual contact with a pupil from the school or setting;
- avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, indecent;
- avoid any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive, provocative or give rise to speculation e.g. verbal comments, letters, notes, by email or on social media, phone calls, texts, physical contact;
- not make sexual remarks to or about a pupil;
- not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of pupils other than within agreed curriculum content or as part of their recognised job role;
- there are occasions when 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;

A relationship between a member of staff, a volunteer or a governor and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of pupils and all adults have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. It is important to recognise that women as well as men may abuse a position of trust.

One to One Situations and Meetings with Pupils

Staff working in one to one situations with pupils are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meeting accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. It is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the school and to ensure that the door of the room is left open and/or visual/auditory contact with others is maintained. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises or on the school site when the school is not in session are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent/ guardian and the head teacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

Home Visits

This means that staff should:

- agree the purpose for any home visit with SLT;
- undertake a risk assessment;
- avoid unannounced visits wherever possible;
- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations;
- always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure; and
- ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with the DSL and SLT.

Transporting Pupils

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities, staff, volunteers or governors may agree to transport pupils. Wherever possible, transport arrangements should be made in advance by a designated member of staff. Wherever possible and practicable, transport should be provided other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.

Adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Staff should:

- plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance;
- respond sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise;
- take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil;
- have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle;
- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive;
- ensure that if they need to be alone with a pupil this is for the minimum time;
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupil is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer;
- report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures;
- ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety;
- complete a risk assessment; and
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified.

Educational Visits and School Clubs

Staff and volunteers should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting or after-school activity. Staff and volunteers remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply. If dealing with intimate care duties, two members of staff must be present.

Staff should:

- undertake a risk assessment depending upon the place being visited;
- have parental consent for the activity;
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times;
- never share beds with a child/pupil;
- never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Head teacher, parents and pupils; and
- refer to the Educational Visits Policy.

First Aid and Medication

Staff should be aware of the guidelines as highlighted in the school's First Aid policy.

Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity or to celebrate achievement. The Data Protection Act 1998 affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is, therefore, a requirement under the Act that consent is obtained from the parent/carer of a child for any images made such as those used for school web sites, productions or other purposes.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for such images to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Particular regard needs to be given when they involve young or vulnerable pupils who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place. Pupils who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography, filming, etc, in the teaching environment.

Staff should remain sensitive to any pupil who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken.

Using images of pupils for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access.

When using a photograph the following guidance must be followed:

- if the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil (and certainly the surname);
- if the pupil is named, avoid using the photograph;
- images must be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so;
- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded;
- ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose;
- ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability;
- be able to justify the images made;
- do not make images in one to one situations;
- no photos should be taken on a member of staff's own camera or phone;
- only the school camera and a school ipad can be used to take photos; and
- do not take, display or distribute images of pupils unless there is consent to do so.

The school has additional guidance on the use of images which includes a consent form. The guidance forms part of this Code of Conduct. A list of children who cannot be photographed or filmed will be published by the school office annually.

Exposure to Inappropriate Images

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images.

There are no circumstances that will justify adults: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images or pseudo-images of children (child abuse images). Accessing these images, whether using the setting's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal.

If indecent images of children are discovered at the establishment or on the school or setting's equipment an immediate referral should be made to the DSL and the police contacted if relevant. The images/equipment should be secured and there should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action. If the images are of children known to the school, a referral should also be made to children's social care in line with local arrangements.

Under no circumstances should any adult use school or setting equipment to access pornography. Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should never be brought into or used in the workplace. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue working with children and young people.

Staff should keep their passwords confidential and not allow unauthorised access to equipment. In the event of any indecent images of children or unsuitable material being discovered on a device the equipment should not be tampered with in any way. It should be secured and isolated from the network, and the DSL contacted without delay. Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves as this may lead to a contamination of evidence and a possibility they will be at risk of prosecution themselves.

Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff must take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

The governing body is required by law to have a policy on sex and relationships education and it forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Staff should:

- have clear written lesson plans;
- take care when encouraging pupils to use self-expression, not to overstep personal and professional boundaries; and
- be able to justify all curriculum materials and relate these to clearly identifiable lessons plans.

Whistleblowing, Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff, volunteers and governors must be vigilant and share concerns and report incidents. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. The following behaviours give indications of the kinds of situations which should be shared with a senior member of staff.

An adult who:

- allows a pupil/young person to be treated badly; pretends not to know it is happening;
- gossips/shares information inappropriately;
- demonstrates inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or uses inappropriate language;
- dresses in a way which is inappropriate for the job role;
- does not treat pupils fairly - demonstrates favouritism;
- demonstrates a lack of understanding about personal and professional boundaries;
- uses his/her position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine;
- appears to have an inappropriate social relationship with a pupil or pupils;
- appears to have special or different relationships with a pupil or pupils; and
- seems to seek out unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil

The above should be read in conjunction with the school's Whistleblowing policy.

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 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.

Use of Mobile Phones

Mobile phones should only be used by members of staff before school, during breaktime, during lunchtime and after school whereby no children will be present. It is therefore recommended that staff keep their phones out of sight and on silent.

Under no circumstances should staff answer their phone whilst a child/children are present or in open spaces.

There may be times (i.e. family illness) when a member of staff may need their phone 'on'. This is a rare occurrence and SLT need to be informed if this is the case.

Under no circumstances should photos of children or an activity be taken on a personal mobile phone.

Only in an emergency should a staff member's mobile phone be used to contact a parent/carer.

Child Safeguarding Competences for staff and volunteers who work with Children and Young People

The following competences are necessary:

- emotional awareness;
- aware of the range of emotions in self and others;
- demonstration of empathy for the concerns of others;
- listens to and understands directly and indirectly expressed feelings;
- encourages others to express themselves openly;
- manages strong emotions and responds constructively to the source of problems;
- listens to personal comments without becoming defensive In highly stressful situations, keeps own feelings in check, takes constructive action and calms others down;
- has a range of mechanisms for dealing with stress, can recognise when to use them and does so;
- shows respect for others' feelings, views and circumstances;
- working within professional boundaries;
- demonstrates professional curiosity;
- accepts responsibility and accountability for own work and can define the responsibilities of others;
- recognises the limits of own authority within the role;
- seeks and uses professional support appropriately;
- understands the principle of confidentiality;
- has a balanced understanding of self and others;
- has a realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses;
- can demonstrate flexibility of approach;
- ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people;
- appreciates the significance of safeguarding and interprets this accurately for all individual children and young people whatever their life circumstances;
- has a good understanding of the safeguarding agenda;
- can demonstrate an ability to contribute towards a safe environment;
- is up-to-date with legislation and current events;
- can demonstrate how s/he has promoted 'best practice'; and
- shows a personal commitment to safeguarding children, volunteers and governors to abide by it.

All staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to keep pupils and themselves safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by adults that demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Following this Code of Conduct will help to safeguard staff, governors and volunteers from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to pupils.

Signed: (Headteacher)

Date:

Signed:.....(Chair of Governors')

Date:

DRAFT