



Staff Code of Conduct

Approved: Term 1 22-23

Next review: Term 1 23-24

Dress and appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- promotes a positive and professional image
- is appropriate to 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 not considered to be discriminatory
- is compliant with professional standards

Employees should wear their school lanyard and identity badge at all times when on the school premises or within working hours.

Mobile phones for personal use

Use of mobile telephones for personal use should not be permitted in sight of the children, i.e. during teaching hours and in school. Please ensure your phone is switched to silent and check it only during your break times when away from the children. Personal devices should not be used to take pictures of the children. Where calls are expected within the school day, permission should be sought from SLT in advance. In emergencies, a mobile phone can be used to receive a telephone call, which should be taken away from the children, where possible.

Gifts/Rewards and Hospitality

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, 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 usually acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. The gift register must be completed if the value of gifts received is more than a total of £50, for an individual gift or a series of smaller gifts across the year.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give individualised gifts to pupils or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Physical contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan. Not all children feel comfortable about certain types of physical contact.

Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the pupil.

Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times and not leave themselves in a vulnerable position.

In certain curriculum areas, such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

Intimate/Personal Care

Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that they are visible and/or audible. Intimate or personal care procedures should not involve more than one member of staff unless the pupil's care plan specifies the reason for this.

A signed record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering. 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 young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

One to one situations

Staff working in one to one situations with pupils at the setting, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

This means that staff should:

- ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- inform a colleague when, where and who they are working with and when they return
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved

Professional relationships with own children

To maintain a professional relationship at all times and with all children, we ask that you guide your own child to another member of staff to deal with any issues that may arise, and follow the school policies and procedures.

Conduct outside the workplace

Employees must not engage in conduct outside of work which has the potential to:

- affect, or is likely to affect, the suitability of the employee to undertake their job role or work with children in a school
- impact on the operation or reputation of the school or with any of its stakeholders
- seriously undermine the trust and confidence that the school has in the employee to undertake their job role

Smoking (including e cigarettes)

There must be no smoking on the school site at any time. Staff should be aware that smoking immediately outside the school gate could also be damaging to the school's reputation.

Alcohol, illegal substances and medication

Staff are expected not to use illegal substances. Whilst alcohol is legally and freely available, staff must ensure that the use of alcohol out of employment hours does not adversely affect their work performance, and that, in accordance with their obligations under health and safety legislation, they take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and other workers whilst at work. Staff must not arrive at work under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs, be impaired in any way due to this, or consume alcohol or take illicit drugs on the school sites. Staff should also have regard to the expectation that they will not bring the school into disrepute. Staff are reminded that any adverse publicity around use of illegal substances is more likely to damage the school's reputation than are complaints about staff abuse of alcohol.

The school recognises that alcoholism and other addictions are illnesses and that staff should be offered appropriate support. The school will also be mindful of the effects of legally prescribed drugs or certain types of medication on the performance of staff and will rely on them disclosing this information a member of SLT in order to undertake a risk assessment where necessary and taking occupational health or other specialist advice as appropriate.

Staff who are prescribed a type of medication which they have not taken before should make themselves aware of possible side-effects. In accordance with their duty to take reasonable care of their own and their colleagues' health and safety they should advise SLT if the medication starts to affect their ability to do their job or travel safely to work, or if there is a likelihood that this will happen.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action in line with the school's discipline and conduct policy.