

Blackshaw Moor CE (VC) First School

Staff Behaviour Policy (including code of practice for employees in the use of social networking sites and electronic media and policy on mobile phones)

Working together for the benefit of all

Introduction

Statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (April 2014), makes the adoption of a Staff Behaviour Policy mandatory. This policy is written to guide governors and teachers towards achieving this. This policy applies to all members of staff employed by the school and is designed to ensure protection of the pupils and staff in school, as well as the reputation of the school itself.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the statutory guidance above and with the Staffordshire SSCB guidance document 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'. All staff have a duty to know and understand and follow the contents of the school's related policies: **Safeguarding policy, e-safety policy, Health and Safety policy, Acceptable Use of Photographs and Images policy, ICT Acceptable Use policy, Mobile Phone policy and Whistle blowing policy.**

Purpose of Policy

It is important that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. This policy provides clear guidance on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children. The policy aims to:

- set clear expectations for behaviour.
- assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- support safer recruitment practice;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children and young people;
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Adults should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Adults should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the schools and is a framework for behaviour.

Promoting fundamental British Values

Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools' (DfE, November 2014), states:

'Schools should promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.'

Actively promoting the values means:

- Challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values
- Enable pupils to develop their understanding of British values through the provision of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education (SMSC)

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

- All staff must place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice.
- All staff must have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
- All staff must demonstrate high standards of behaviour and conduct which support the stated aims and ethos of our school, promote fundamental British values and set a good example for pupils to follow.
- All staff must demonstrate high standards of personal demeanour and presentation in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.
- All staff must maintain high standards of professional appearance, personal hygiene and grooming.
- All staff must speak to all members of the school community in a respectful and calm manner representing the school in a positive light. Body language should be open and appropriate.
- All teachers will comply with the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012).

- All staff will arrive at school in good time to begin their contracted hours. If there is a reason that this won't happen then the school needs to be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils (e.g. social services, local health services, welfare visitors etc.)
- 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.
- The School considers "integrity" a key personal and professional attribute. Consequently, staff are expected to "blow the whistle" on other colleagues where dishonest practice is observed.
- Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils, or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student.
- Staff must inform the Headteacher [Chair of Governors if the employee is the Headteacher] immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, policy enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the school

Unacceptable Behaviour

- All staff must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct. This will include avoiding involvement in over familiar relationships with pupils, engaging in conversations not appropriate to the pupil-teacher professional relationship and engagement in inappropriate humour.
- Body language must not be threatening (e.g. avoid excessive pointing, invasion of personal body space and unnecessary physical contact).
- Visible arguments, disagreements with colleagues and other employees in front of pupils, parents, other members of staff or visitors are not acceptable.
- Swearing or the use of other inappropriate language at or in the presence of pupils or parents.
- Discussions or use of language that might otherwise be deemed offensive (for example, use of sexualised language or discussion of topics on an inappropriate adult theme).
- Making racist or other discriminatory comments (based on sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation, ageism or cultural origin).
- Use of language or gestures designed to intimidate (e.g. mocking comments based on personal appearance or sarcastic humour).

- Making detrimental comments or allegations about other colleagues or their competence if in front of parents, pupils and/or staff.
- Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, the standing of the employee or other employees, or any other stakeholders connected with the school.
- Staff must not be involved in any criminal offences.
- Staff must not be involved in sexual misconduct that comes to the notice of the school, or any stakeholder of the school, including digital or printed media forms of any type.
- Staff must not make derogatory or other unacceptable comments in any public media forum. This includes any comments made in any digital or printed media - whether the forum be open, closed or controlled in any way with its distribution where members of the audience are stakeholders of the school and its community even if they are made with privacy setting at their maximum.
- The school respects that staff are entitled to privacy in their personal life, however, the school has a duty to inform an individual if they become aware of any behaviour or lifestyle choice that has the possibility of causing the school harm at some point in the future.
- Staff may undertake work outside of school, either paid or voluntary provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school, and is not at a level which may contravene the working time regulations.
- Staff may not contact pupils using personal communication systems.
- Staff may not take pupils on social trips to restaurants, theme parks, public houses or any other social venue unless it has been officially sanctioned and cleared by the school.

Further requirements related to staff behaviour and conduct.

Declaration of Interests

An employee is required to declare this where the group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared. All declarations are updated annually on a school Register of Business Interests. Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school their relationship with any individual[s] where this might cause a conflict with school activities.

Probity of Records and Other Documents

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Gifts or Hospitality to an Employee

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Governing Body and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

The only exceptions to these are:

Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Gifts offered by parents or pupils to school staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates, however, only gifts with an individual value of £25 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing to the Governing Body or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

Use of School Contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities [required reading; Financial Regulations for Schools].

Other Employment

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the school, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest or adversely affect their primary employment at the school. The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Headteacher [Governing Body if the employee is the Headteacher] informed of their employment at other organisations.

Use of School Premises, Equipment & Communication Systems

School equipment and systems [phone, email and computers] are available only for school-related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorised by the Headteacher in case of an emergency, or where used for brief periods outside of working hours. This includes photocopy facilities, stationery and premises.

Disciplinary Action

Failure to meet appropriate standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. In cases of relatively minor infringements of the code of conduct, the Headteacher will consult with the Chair of Governors on an appropriate and proportionate response. This may include a requirement to address the behaviour observed via the monitored PM procedures or alternatively may include a verbal or written note. Where the 'relative severity' of any breaches of the code of misconduct is difficult to determine, a governors' Committee will meet to determine the level of misconduct and at this stage, the identity of any member of staff involved will not be revealed.

All staff have the right of appeal against any disciplinary outcomes and these are detailed in the school's published procedures.

Approved by staff

Approved by personnel committee:

Date approved by governing body:

Review: September 2017

