Carrdus School

Code of Conduct for Staff

Introduction

The Code of Conduct applies to all staff working or living on the Tudor Hall site or working at Carrdus, including partners and family members of resident members of staff. Clearly, there are some sections that do not apply to certain groups of staff within the school (Tudor Hall and Carrdus), but all staff are asked to adhere to the spirit of the Code of Conduct at all times, and to the specific points that are relevant to them.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to offer advice on aspects of professional practice that may not be covered by school policy. Whilst employment contracts and job descriptions state expectations of teachers, teachers also work to a set of professional values that guide everything they do, but these are often 'understood' rather than written down in a policy. This Code of Conduct aims to clarify these areas. Additionally, in recent years, those working in schools have expressed concern about their increasing vulnerability about allegations that could be made against them. The Code of Conduct addresses these concerns, by ensuring that all staff are aware of good practice in the areas covered.

It is important to understand that, while every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, a Code of Conduct cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements have to be made in situations not covered by this document. In such circumstances, staff should always advise senior colleagues of the situation.

Within the Code of Conduct, references are sometimes made to existing school policies. Staff therefore need to ensure that they familiarise themselves with such policies.

1. Dress and appearance

Staff should:

- Wear clothing that promotes a positive and professional image.
- Ensure that they are dressed modestly, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake during the working day.
- Staff should wear their lanyard each day

2. Timekeeping

Staff should:

- Arrive punctually for the start of their working/teaching day
- Be punctual for lessons.
- Attend all necessary meetings eg briefings, staff meetings and whole school INSET and send apologies when unable to attend
- Full-time staff may leave during the school day if they have no other commitments including cover.

3. Curriculum

Staff should:

- Maintain clear, accurate and up to planning documents for long, medium and short term.
- Avoid discussions about other subjects which could be seen as critical by the pupils.

4. Duty of care:

Staff should:

- Understand the responsibilities which are part of their employment or role.
- Have read and understood whole school policies relating to student welfare.
- Behave as any reasonable parent would do in promoting the welfare and safety of pupils in their care.
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

5. Rewards and sanctions:

Staff should:
- Have read and be familiar with the Behaviour Policy.
- Apply rewards and sanctions fairly and consistently in line with the Behaviour Policy.

6. Gifts

Staff should:
- Ensure that they read the relevant section in the employment handbook regarding gifts they may receive from pupils or parents.
- Only give gifts to pupils as part of an agreed rewards system, and should ensure that the pupils understand why they have been given a gift (eg winning a competition).
- Ensure that any personal gifts given to pupils are of insignificant value and are given to all pupils equally.

7. Confidentiality:

Staff should:
- Be guided by the Confidentiality protocol
- Treat personal information about pupils as confidential, and only share it with other staff on a need-to-know basis.
- Treat personal information about other staff as confidential, and never share it with the pupils or other staff without permission.
- Understand the circumstances when confidentiality needs to be broken, ie safeguarding issues and do not promise confidentiality.
- Report all concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Take care with confidential documents and ensure that they are kept and disposed of securely and in accordance with Data Processing Notice.
- Only work on a password protected device when working off site
- Save work to the network when working remotely, rather than their personal hard drive
- Avoid emailing sensitive information to themselves
- Seek advice from the Bursar (Data Protection Officer) or the Head (Designated Safeguarding Lead) if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested from them.

8. Exercise of professional judgement

This code of conduct cannot contain a complete checklist of what is or is not appropriate conduct. Where no specific guidance exists, staff should use their professional judgement when dealing with a situation.

Additionally, staff should:
- Keep records of discussions and actions taken, providing explanations and justifications for their actions and place them on file.
- Discuss the incident with the appropriate senior manager as soon as possible.
- Discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a senior manager.

9. Power and positions of trust

Staff should:
- Ensure that the relationships they have with pupils are appropriate to their age and gender.

Staff should not:
- Use language or conduct that gives rise to comment or speculation.
- Use their position of trust for personal advantage and/or to a pupil's detriment.
- Use power to intimidate, undermine or threaten pupils.

10. One-to-one situations

Staff should:
- Avoid one-to-one meetings in remote areas of the school.
- Conduct one-to-one meetings in a room with visual access where possible. Where this is not possible, staff should consider whether it is appropriate to leave the door open during the meeting
- Report any situation where a pupil becomes angry or upset in a one- to-one situation to a member of SMT and record the details on CPOMS.

11a) Relationships with pupils – propriety and behaviour

Staff should not:
- Behave in a way which puts into question their suitability to work with young people.
- Make sexual remarks to a pupil.
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils.
- Discuss pupils' sexual relationships either with them or with colleagues in an inappropriate context or setting.
- Make inappropriate personal comments which apportion blame, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such by others.

11b) Relationships with pupils – coping with pupils in distress

Staff should:
- Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil, remembering that when offering reassurance and comfort, a side hug is appropriate.
- Inform a senior colleague when and how they offered comfort to a pupil who has become unusually distressed or angry.
- Record situations that may give rise to concern, giving a copy to the Head.
- Be guided by the Use of Reasonable Force Policy.

11c) Social contact

Staff should:
- Have any social contact with pupils approved by the Head.
- Inform Head of any regular social contact they have with any pupil that may give rise to concern.
- Report and record any incident they feel might compromise the school or themselves.
- Remember the guidance about confidentiality offered elsewhere in the Code of Conduct when meeting socially with pupils or parents.
- Be aware of the power of social networking sites and be cautious when posting pictures and comments
- Be very cautious when using social networking sites to communicate with previous pupils and parents.

Staff should not:
- Give their personal details to pupils, unless the need to do so has been agreed by the Head.
- Communicate with current pupils on social networking and messaging sites.

11d) Relationships with pupils – infatuations

Staff should:
- Report any indications that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff and seek guidance on how to deal with this.

11e) Physical contact

Staff should:
- Be familiar with the Use of Reasonable Force policy.
- Explain to pupils why contact is necessary and what form it will take.
- Be prepared to explain their actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.
- Never touch a pupil in a way that may be considered indecent.

11f) Care, control and physical intervention

Staff should:
- Adhere to the guidelines offered in the Use of Reasonable Force policy.
- Try to defuse situations where possible.
- Communicate to the Head or Deputy Head any situations which have required reference to the Use of Reasonable Force policy.
- Use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.
- Record all incidents in the central log.

11g) Physical education and other activities that require physical contact

Staff should:
- Explain what form the contact will take and why it is necessary
- Be familiar with the Use of Reasonable Force policy

11h) Showers, changing and boarding accommodation

Staff should:
- Avoid any physical contact when pupils are in a state of undress
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Knock, announce their intention of entering and await a response from pupils or supervising member of staff when entering a class if 'Changing' notice is posted.

11i) Sexual contact with young people

Staff should:
- Not pursue sexual relationships with pupils in or out of school.
- Avoid any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, ie verbal comments, letters, notes, emails, texts. As a rule of thumb, staff should feel happy to copy any communication with a pupil to the Head.
- Note that it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 in a position of trust to have a sexual relationship with a child under the age of 18, even if it is consensual.

12a) Relationships with parents:

Staff should:
- Be professional and polite at all times and report any difficult incidents to SMT.

- Avoid any contact with parents that might be seen to be too personal or intrusive and report incidents that develop.
- Ensure that they remember the guidelines offered about confidentiality if they have social contact with parents outside school and inform a senior colleague if they find themselves being put under pressure to divulge inappropriate information about the school.

12b) Communication with parents:

Staff should:
- Respond to any communication from a parent as soon as possible, bearing in mind their hours of work in school and keep a copy on file.
- Reassure parents that the matter they raise will be investigated.
- Read and adhere to the email protocol in Safe Use o ICT Policy.

13. Transporting children

When using their own vehicle to transport children, staff should:
- Ensure that they complete the driver declaration form available from the Bursary
- Be aware that they hold full responsibility for pupils for the duration of the journey.

14. Educational visits and after school clubs

Staff should:
- Complete all the necessary paperwork in accordance with agreed school procedures.
- Ensure that staff/pupil ratios are adhered to.
- Remain professional at all times, remembering that they represent the school both on and off the school site.

15. Photography, video and other creative arts

Staff should:
- Ensure that activities involving filming and photography have a clear purpose, and that pupils are aware of this purpose.
- Ensure that all material is openly available for scrutiny to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify images of pupils in their possession.
- Avoid making images in one to one situations.
- Not store any pictures of pupils on personal machinery.
- Be aware of any pupils whose parents or guardians have not given permission for their photos to be displayed in the press or on the website. If in any doubt, staff should check with school office or registrar, before submitting images.

16. Internet use

Staff should:
- Read and abide by the terms of the school's Safe Use of ICT Policy: Agreement for the Safe Use of ICT by Adults Working in School.

17. Whistleblowing

Staff should:
- Read and abide by the Whistleblowing Policy

18. Low Level Concerns

Staff should:
- Read and abide by the Low Level Concern Policy

19. Relationships with colleagues

Staff should:

- Be courteous and professional to each other at all times.
- Be mindful of the fact that they are role models to the pupils, and should act accordingly in their interactions in front of the pupils.

20. Sharing concerns and reporting incidents

Staff should:

- Be familiar with the school's system for recording concerns.
- Take responsibility for recording any incident or concerns they may have about the welfare of a pupil, and pass on that information to the relevant senior colleague.

21. Pets

Staff wishing to bring pets on site should:

- See the Head in the first instance to discuss the matter.
- Ensure that they sign a copy of the Pet Agreement if permission is given.