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Arbour House School

Code of Conduct

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Staff Code of Conduct

All staff are expected to follow the Arbour House Code of Conduct. Breaches of this code will be dealt with appropriately in accordance with POTENS disciplinary procedure.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the DfE guidance: 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings - 2019'.

1. Definition

1.1. References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years who are pupils or come into contact with Arbour House School.

1.2. References made to adults and staff refer to all those who work with children in the school, in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

1.3. The term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person who works with children 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children.

2. Introduction

2.1. Schools have a legal duty to create and maintain a safe learning environment for children. A staff Code of Conduct is a mandatory requirement as described in the DfE statutory guidance: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018'.

2.2. Arbour House School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for children in our care. The following code draws together existing laws, regulations and conditions of service designed to protect the interests of staff and volunteers and the children with whom we work.

2.3. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this code could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

3. Purpose and Scope

3.1. All staff and volunteers working in a school setting have a legal and moral duty to keep children safe and protect them from harm. Staff should ensure they do not put themselves in situations in which allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour could be made.

3.2. This code applies to all adults working in schools whatever their position, role or responsibilities.

3.3. All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding, which should be explained as part of staff induction and through regular staff training.

3.4. The code should be read in conjunction with the relevant statutory and other guidance documents issued nationally or by the DfE and Home Office as well as other related school policies, listed at the end of this policy.

3.5. This code cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to show the standard expected of staff but it does not replace the general requirements of the law.

3.6. All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this code, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct which this code supplements.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

3.7. It is recognised that the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. Achieving these aims is not always straightforward, as much relies on child and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. This code aims to reduce the risk of that.

4. Core Principles

4.1. The welfare of the children is paramount.

4.2. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should seek to avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.

4.3. Staff should dress appropriately at all times for the tasks they undertake and ensure they promote a positive and professional image.

4.4. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.

4.5. Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or substances, including prescribed medication that may affect their ability to care for children.

4.6. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct, prohibition from teaching by the National College of Teaching & Leadership (NCTL).

4.7. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed and should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

4.8. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident which may give rise to concern.

4.9. Records should be made of any incident and decision made or where further actions have been agreed, in accordance with school policies and confidentiality.

4.10. All staff should know the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and be familiar with local child protection arrangements, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, whistleblowing procedures and their Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

4.11. Staff should be aware of and comply with the school's financial and administrative regulations and any other procedure manuals.

5. Conduct and Behaviour

5.1. All staff who work in a school setting are in a position of trust in relation to individuals in their care and so must adopt high standards of personal integrity and conduct and behave in such a way that does not compromise their position both within and outside of the workplace or the safety and/or welfare of children and young people.

5.2. Staff should be aware that it is a criminal offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003: abuse of a position of trust) to engage in sexual activity with a pupil under the age of 18.

5.3. Teachers are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct in accordance with the minimum professional Teaching Standards.

5.4. Staff should never make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional comments or use physical force as a form of punishment.

5.5. Staff should always adhere to the school's policy on Behaviour Management.

5.6. Staff should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit. Nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

5.7 Compliance with all reasonable instructions:

- You must comply with all reasonable instructions or requests made by your Manager, Head Teacher or Senior Potens staff.
- You must adhere to all agreements and procedures in respect of Education Plans, Curriculum, Risk Assessments, Office & Financial Procedures etc.
- You must comply with any requirements to undertake training identified by Arbour House School and Potens and deemed to be mandatory to your role.

6. Equality Issues

6.1. All staff should adhere to the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, in addition to the requirements of the law.

6.2. All adults and children at the school have a right to be treated at all times with fairness, equality and without discrimination. Any form of harassment, intimidation or bullying is not acceptable.

7. Employment Matters

7.1. All staff involved in recruitment and selection processes should ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit, without discrimination and in accordance with the school's recruitment and selection policy and procedure.

7.2. No member of staff should be involved in any appointment or decision relating to discipline, promotion, or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they are in a close personal relationship.

7.3. All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, should be made known to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors (if the Headteacher).

7.4 You must attend work according to your contract and attend at the agreed times. This includes attendance at training.

7.5 You must not be absent from work without authorisation. Persistent lateness is unauthorised absence and may lead to disciplinary action.

7.6 You must follow the Sickness and Absence Policy when absent from work due to ill health, reporting this absence as soon as is practicably possible. All staff must comply with the requirement to produce medical certificates where necessary.

7.7 You must use all IT equipment in accordance with the Company's Information Technology standard. This includes a prohibition on accessing internet sites or chat rooms which contain material which could be considered offensive e.g. with pornographic, racist or sexist content.

7.8 You must only use e-mail in accordance with the Company's Information Technology standard.

7.9 You must only use the Company vehicles if you have been authorised to do so and in accordance with agreed procedures.

7.10 You must only use Company property for Company activities.

7.11 You must not take Company property for personal use either on or off the organisation's premises.

7.12 You must not steal or misappropriate, or fail to account for, or falsely claim entitlement to Company property, assets or funds.

7.13 You must complete all personnel forms, including application forms, declaration of criminal records forms, medical records, leave requests and other company forms, honestly & accurately.

7.14 You must not falsify the time or attendance records of yourself or a fellow employee, or encourage a fellow employee to take such action on your behalf.

7.15 You must not alter, destroy or retain Company records or documents except in accordance with stated policy.

7.16 You must seek assistance from your line manager or other appropriate person if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work or you are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter.

8. Public Duty and Private Interest

8.1. Staff should not put themselves in a position where their duty to the school and their private interests conflict.

8.2 You must not behave in any way, in work or outside work, which might bring into question your suitability to work in at the school.

9. Other Employment/Private Work

9.1. Any external work undertaken must not bring the school into disrepute or conflict with the school's interest.

9.2 Any copyright created by a member of staff during their employment with the school becomes the property of the school.

10. Safeguarding

10.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from actual or risk of:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

10.2. The duty to safeguard children and young people includes the duty to report child welfare concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10.3. Staff should be aware of and adopt the recommended procedures and best practice guidance outlined in the national Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (October 2015).

10.4. Staff should be aware of and follow the statutory responsibilities outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

10.5. Staff should be aware of the risks to children from radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism as outlined in the Prevent Duty guidance.

- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2019](#)

(i) This document will be used to support the Code of Conduct and as such may be referred to in any disciplinary proceedings.

(ii) Staff should read this document in conjunction with this code.

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#)

(i) This document sets out the statutory duties schools must follow and includes guidance on mandatory reporting requirements. It is advised that this is read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children.

(ii) Staff should ensure they understand and are familiar with their responsibilities and where this includes mandatory reporting expectations they understand their role any locally agreed procedures for reporting, such as informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

(iii) Staff should be aware of the personal reporting duty with regard to known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM). Supplementary to Keeping Children Safe in Education, staff can obtain further guidance in the 'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information' document.

(iv) Staff should refer any concerns about another member of staff to the Headteacher, or if the concern is about the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors or equivalent.

(v) Staff should raise concerns of poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in safeguarding, using the school's whistleblowing policy.

10.1.1 Prevent Duty

(i) Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, staff must have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'

(ii) Staff should refer any concerns regarding radicalisation to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or a senior member of staff, following the school's normal safeguarding procedures.

(iii) Relevant staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme, a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

(iv) Staff should ensure they have undertaken some form of Prevent awareness training

11. Financial inducements, gifts, hospitality and sponsorship

11.1. Staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school

11.2. Staff are not permitted to accept or solicit any gifts, money, services or other inducements for personal gain or the gain of family or friends. The only exception to this, with authorisation, is gifts of a trifling nature and value. Staff should ensure that gifts are declared if they are received.

11.3. Where staff provide gifts they should ensure they are of insignificant value and given to all children equally. This should ALWAYS be discussed with the Headteacher before brought into the school.

12. Use of School Time and Facilities

12.1. The school's property and facilities (e.g. stationery, computers, photocopiers, mobile phones) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted.

13. Publication of Books/Articles

13.1. Staff must consult with the Headteacher before publishing book, articles, letters, dissertations etc where they are described as holding an appointment at the school.

14. Disciplinary Action

14.1. All staff should be aware that a failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

15. Other Policies and Reference Documents

15.1. The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with other policies for Arbour House School:

1. Safeguarding Policy
2. Whistleblowing Policy
3. Disciplinary Policy
4. Information and Data Governance, Protection and Management Policy (GDPR)
5. Staff Handbook
6. Drugs and Alcohol Policy
7. Equal Opportunities
8. Health & Safety policies and procedures

15.2. In addition:

1. DfE 2019: Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices
2. Intimate Care Guidance
3. Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2022

POLICY REVIEW RECORD

POLICY NAME	Staff Code of Conduct	
COMPILED BY	Sue Hoxey	
DATE	September 2017	
REVIEW DUE DATE	REVIEWED	
	DATE	BY (NAME) Items updated
March 2022	1/3/22	B Jeppesen Added policy review document
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March 2025		