



Featherstone Wood Primary School

Code of Conduct & Relationships at work policy

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Headteacher

Date

Chair of Governors

Date



Code of conduct

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1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour that all school employees and those acting on behalf of the school are expected to observe. All staff are role models, and are in a unique position of influence, and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment are required to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012', in particular relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, and regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure which may be found on the policies in the shared drive.

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

Where this policy requires an employee to disclose matters from their personal life the school will consider the circumstances and context of each matter before determining whether any further action is required.

2. Principles

All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

Staff must not undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

All staff must attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.

2.1. Setting an example

All staff set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Therefore, all staff must:

- avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times
- demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same
- avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

3. Safeguarding Pupils

Staff have a duty to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education throughout their employment and abide by the duties placed upon them within this.

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Designated Senior Person (DSP).

The School's DSL is Louise Shuttleworth. The Deputy DSL is Sarah Haynes (Deputy Head), Charlotte Bevan (EY Lead), Kelly Shurmer-Elliott (KS1 Lead) and Claire Waite (Counsellor)

Staff have access to the Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure which may be found on the shared drive, website and hard copy in the staff room and Heads office and staff must be familiar with these documents.

Staff should treat pupils with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing, or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils.

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Staff should be aware that the management of any safeguarding concerns is dealt in accordance with the latest statutory guidance as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education and includes any allegations that meet the harm test and/or allegations considered to be low level concerns. (i. e those which do not meet the harm test).

3.1. Low Level Concerns

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm test threshold.

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

4. Relationships

Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils, staff, clients, contractors supplies or parents outside of the school. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, and/or family connections.

Existing or new personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the Line Manager where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either (for example: a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest). The Line Manager will treat declarations in confidence in accordance with the Relationships at Work Policy at the end of this policy which may be found shared drive, website and hard copy in the staff room and Heads office.

Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections and should use Appendix 2 and/or 3 to make a declaration.

4.1. Relationships with pupils

Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with pupils are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

Encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which may lead to a sexual relationship, or any other inappropriate relationship will be viewed as a grave breach of trust.

Contact with pupils must be via school-authorized mechanisms and solely for educational purposes. At no time should a personal telephone number, text, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.

If contacted by a pupil by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to their Line Manager immediately.

Behaviour giving rise to concern should also be reported which includes pupils seeking affection, being sexually provocative or exhibiting overly familiar behaviour.

5. Pupil Development

Staff must comply with all school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of pupils.

Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

6. Honesty and Integrity

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.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be found guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they:

- offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone
- if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person.

If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure which may be found shared drive, website and hard copy in the staff room and Heads office.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Line Manager/Headteacher, with the exception of one off “token” gifts from pupils or parents.

Personal gifts from individual members of staff to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

Staff must not act on behalf of the school unless they have the authority to do so.

Professional references from the school will be provided by the relevant person with delegated authority. References or endorsements on social media given by other members of staff must be clear that they are provided in a personal capacity.

7. Conduct outside of Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, any conduct or behaviour that indicates an employee may not be suitable to work with children including such behaviour outside of the workplace which may or may not involve children is likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

For example, should a member of staff be involved in domestic violence at home and no children were involved, the school will need to consider what triggered these actions and question whether a child in the school could trigger the same reaction, therefore be put at risk.

In addition, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable where it brings into question an employee's suitability or ability to do their role/work in an educational setting.

Staff may undertake work outside the school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school, nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. It is recommended that permission is sought in advance.

- staff must disclose any work outside the school or outside business interests where there is a potential conflict of interests with their employment at the school
- if any allegation of wrongdoing occurs in a staff member's work outside the school (whether or not they deny this) which may have a bearing on their employment, they must disclose this immediately to the Headteacher or their Line Manager.

Forming inappropriate relationships or friendships with children or young people who are pupils under the age of 18 at another school/college will be viewed as inappropriate and impact upon the school's ability to trust the member of staff to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at the school.

Any work-related social event is considered to be an extension of the workplace and as such the standards of behaviour expected at these events is in line with this policy.

8. E-Safety and Internet Use

Staff must exercise caution at all times both inside and outside of work when using information technology. Staff should be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social media sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media use. This includes creating, endorsing, liking, posting, retweeting, sharing direct messaging or sending any statements, photo's, videos, audios or messages. This also includes speaking and/or lip syncing to other creators' content and any music used.

This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.

Contact with pupils should only be made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate and strictly for educational reasons.

Photographs or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.

Further details on this can be found in the Online Safety Policy and Acceptable User Agreements, and social media Policy which may be found shared drive, website and hard copy in the staff room and Heads office.

9. Confidentiality

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 pupil.

All staff may at some point witness actions or events which need to be confidential.

For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), once reported through the appropriate school procedure, it must not be discussed outside the school, including with other staff, pupils, parents or carers, in the school except with the appropriate member of staff to deal with the matter.

Staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the School's Designated Senior Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must not promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

Staff are not allowed to make any comment to the media about the school, its performance, governance, pupils or parents without written approval. Any media queries should be directed to the Headteacher or designated person.

10. Dress and Appearance

All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role and promote a professional image, not casual wear.

Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans. If clothing has wording or pictures on it, this should not be offensive. Footwear should not pose a health and safety risk.

Where employees are transitioning to live in the gender with which they identify, the school will apply and adapt this code sensitively and flexibly.

The school understands that there may be circumstances that make it difficult for some employees to follow a code (for example, if an employee has a disability or is experiencing certain menopausal symptoms). If this is the case, the school will discuss with the employee how we can support the employee and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

The school has the final say on whether clothing and appearance is appropriate.

11. Compliance

All staff must complete the form in appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated on an annual basis and/or each time the code is amended.

12. Appendix 1- Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Full Name

Current Position

Signed by _____

Date _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

13. Appendix 2 - Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of the school that they may have with pupils.

| Employee Name | Pupil Name | Relationship |
|---------------|------------|--------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of the school with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of the School I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- no monies come through the school at any point, either informally (e.g., via the pupil) or formally
- no private tutoring has/will take place on the school premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Full Name

Current Position

Signed by _____

Date _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

14. Appendix 3 - Relationships outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to others connected with the school outside of work.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of the school that they may have with others that could create a conflict of interest.

| Employee Name | 3 rd party name | Relationship |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct and relationships at work policy, and I am not in breach of these.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Full Name

Current Position

Signed by _____

Date _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

Linked Policies

- Relationships at work (at the end of this policy)
- On-Line Safety
- GDPR
- Whistleblowing
- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bribery

Relationships at work policy

Date of issue: September 2022

Changes since previous version:

Minor changes to wording

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1. Introduction and scope

The school recognises that employees who work together may form personal friendships and, in some cases, close personal relationships. While we do not wish to interfere with these personal relationships, it is necessary for the school to ensure that all employees behave in an appropriate and professional manner while at work.

This policy therefore applies to all employees regardless of their job or level of seniority including but not limited to all employees, casual workers, agency workers, apprentices, volunteers and governors.

A relationship at work can be with any of the above-mentioned parties but also includes but is not limited to parents and third-party providers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

2. Definition of related persons

In the context of this policy a personal relationship is defined as;

- a family relationship (including extended family)
- a business/commercial/financial relationship
- a romantic/sexual relationship.

The above definitions are examples of personal relationships which may give rise to conflicts of interest in the workplace, however personal relationships are not restricted to these examples and anyone who considers that they are in a potential conflict of interest should declare it as outlined in the policy.

3. Personal relationships at work

Whilst the school accepts that partners and family members and friends do work together within the school, some regulation is necessary.

Employees must declare any relationships that they may have with other employees, clients, contractors supplies or parents outside of the school. This may include connections such as mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, and/or family connections.

Existing or new personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the headteacher as soon as possible, especially where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either party (for example: a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest).

Employees should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections and should declare it using the declaration form connected to the code of conduct.

Any employee who has a close personal relationship with another colleague, parent, contractor, supplier, or any other party related to the school must not allow that relationship to influence their conduct while at work.

Where there is evidence that a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality or unfair advantage may occur as a result of employees with a personal relationship working together, the headteacher may consider an alternative arrangement, e.g., a change in reporting arrangements, or duties within a team if appropriate in the circumstances.

14.1. Personal relationships with third parties

Any employee who has a close personal relationship with a third party (such as parent, contractor, supplier, or any other party related to the school) must not allow that relationship to influence their conduct while at work.

If the employee's job allows them authority over any third party, they have a relationship with (for example if the employee has the authority to decide to whom to award contracts), the relationship must be declared to the employee's headteacher.

In these circumstances, the school reserves the right to transfer, or as a last resort to dismiss, the employee following consultation with them.

14.2. Behaviour at work

Intimate behaviour during work time, for example kissing, touching or holding hands, is expressly prohibited. This rule applies during all working time, whether at the normal workplace, at school events or on other premises.

Any breach of this rule will be regarded as a disciplinary offence leading to disciplinary action.

14.3. Safeguarding

Any relationships at work that create or cause a safeguarding breach will be investigated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the schools disciplinary policy.

14.4. Identifying and declaring personal relationship at work

Existing or new personal relationships should be declared to the employee's headteacher.

Where personal relationships occur between employees, it is the responsibility of both individuals to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Employees who are uncertain about whether there is likely to be any risk of a potential conflict of interest emerging from a personal relationship at work, should discuss the matter with their headteacher in the first instance.

All employees have a duty to protect the school and children, any employee sees a conflict of interest, or any unfairness arise due to others having a personal relationship they must report it as soon as possible to headteacher.

Should the conflict of interest involve the headteacher then this should involve the Chair of Governors. In addition, should the conflict of interest involve the Chair of Governors then this should involve the Governance team.

4. Process for managing personal relationships at work

Employees who declare a personal relationship at work, should be treated fairly and with due regard to equality of treatment issues.

The line manager and/or headteacher will treat these matters in confidence and in consultation with the employees and will find ways to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

All declarations should be treated in confidence, recorded in writing and kept securely. Should there be any changes in the future, the employee should request that the document should be removed from the file and destroyed (subject to potential conflict no longer being in existence).

5. Personal relationships involving a more senior role

In order to avoid any actual or potential conflict of interest, employees who are in a line management or supervisory role should ensure they are not involved in any management activity of process involving an employee they have a declared personal relationship. This includes but is not limited to:

- appraisal/performance reviews;
- promotion or discipline;
- authorisation of any financial payments/decisions relating to financial matters e.g., timesheets, fees payments, expense claims, salary changes or allocation of external funding for an employee with whom they have a declared personal relationship. However, if the person is the budget holder, then they should/can see the financial transaction (as part of their role) but have additional independent authorisation;
- recruitment and selection – where it is not practical to remove an employee from the recruitment process, all panel members should be made aware of the personal relationship and every panel decision should be justified as fair and equitable, without bias or conflict of interest.

To avoid a situation in which an employee has managerial authority over another with whom they have a close personal relationship, the school reserves the right to elect to transfer one or both of the employees involved in the relationship to a job in another department/section/area of the school.

In these circumstances, the school will consult both of the employees and seek to reach a satisfactory agreement regarding the transfer of one or both of them.

In such a situation, if it is not possible to transfer at least one of the employees (for example if no suitable vacancies exist, or if an employee refuses to transfer), the school reserves the right to dismiss one or both employees (with notice in accordance with the employee's contract or pay in lieu of notice). Dismissal would, however, be undertaken only as a last resort in circumstances where no other course of action was reasonably open to the school.

6. When a relationship breaks down

There may be occasions when a relationship as described above, breaks down and the individuals concerned remain working together. This can cause a potential impact on the direct team, wider team, school or pupils.

If it is envisaged that the breakdown of the relationship is or will cause ongoing issues, these should be addressed sensitively in discussion with the employees with a view to the issues being resolved.

7. Raising concerns

If an employee believes that they may be personally adversely affected by a misuse of power/authority or conflict of interest, they should raise this with their headteacher in the first instance.

Where any employee feels that there is a possible or actual misuse of power/authority or conflict of interest relating to a personal relationship at work they should raise this with their headteacher in the first instance.

Where this relates to headteacher the employee should raise it to the next appropriate person, likely to be Chair of Governors. In addition, should the conflict of interest involve the Chair of Governors then this should involve the Governance team.

8. Breach of this policy

Where there is evidence that a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality or unfair advantage may result from a personal relationship the headteacher may wish to consider an alternative arrangement e.g., a change in reporting arrangements, or duties within a team; investigating one party being moved to another area of work or work location, if appropriate in the circumstances.

In such a situation, if it is not possible to transfer at least one of the employees (for example if no suitable vacancies exist, or if an employee refuses to transfer), the school reserves the right to dismiss one or both employees (with notice in accordance with the employee's contract or pay in lieu of notice). Dismissal would, however, be undertaken only as a last resort in circumstances where no other course of action was reasonably open to the school.

Where there is evidence that a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality, unfair advantage or created disadvantage has resulted from a personal relationship, the matter will be considered seriously by the school.

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with the schools Disciplinary Policy.

Linked Policies

- Code of Conduct (at the start of this policy)
- On-Line Safety
- GDPR
- Whistleblowing
- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bribery