



This code of conduct reflects the advice in the DfE document 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2015' and recent new advice from KCC on Safeguarding.

Last Reviewed	September 2017
Next review	September 2018
Persons responsible	SLT
Governor committee	P&P

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

At Stocks Green Primary School we believe in creating a whole school culture that is safe and inclusive. Our aims underpin the culture: principles of respect, understanding rights and responsibilities, fairness, tolerance and understanding for all. We inspire and support spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth in a safe, happy and stimulating environment. We are proud to be recognised as a school that values uniqueness and celebrates diversity.

This code of conduct sets out the key principles for the creation and maintenance of a safe school culture for staff and pupils alike.

Objectives of a safe school culture at Stocks Green School:

- To safeguard pupils and protect staff
- To make explicit expectations of performance and conduct
- To minimise opportunities for abuse
- For all staff to have confidence to report concerns with full confidentiality
- To respond promptly to concerns: we always investigate and address issues
- To exercise appropriate sanctions
- To create and maintain an ethos of mutual respect, openness and fairness

Our Code of Conduct

Responsibilities

The term 'staff' refers to any employee working at or for Stocks Green School in any capacity – voluntary or paid..

Staff are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.

All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.

When staff accept a role working in an education setting they should understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust involved in that role.

Making professional judgements

Our staff are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager.

Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Power and positions of trust and authority

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school are in a position of trust in relation to all pupils on the roll.

The relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence.

Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and distance with the pupils – **over familiarity and over friendliness is unacceptable**. Staff must avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident if witnessed.

Confidentiality

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998.

Staff may have access to confidential information about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child. Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities.

If a child, or their parent / carer, makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff should follow the school's whistle blowing procedure. The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Pauline Crowhurst or Claire Rowley.

Expected Standards of Behaviour for Staff

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.

Any member of staff or school volunteer who is or appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, is strictly not allowed to supervise or teach children and thus will be asked to leave the premises.

There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute.

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 set out grounds for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 where the person or a person living in the same household or employed in the same household meets certain criteria set out in the Regulations. All staff must complete the school disqualification form.

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 absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- is not considered to be discriminatory
- is compliant with professional standards

Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion

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.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal 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.

Any reward given to a pupil should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with the school or setting's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

Adults should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria.

Infatuations and 'crushes'

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Head teacher .

Social contact outside of the workplace

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils, independent of the professional relationship.

Staff should recognise that some types of social contact with pupils or their families could be perceived as harmful or exerting inappropriate influence on children, and may bring the staff member and school into disrepute. It is important that staff protect their own integrity and that of the pupils they teach at all times.

If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family

Staff should:

- always approve any planned social contact with pupils or parents with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme
- advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern
- refrain from sending personal communication to pupils or parents unless agreed with senior managers
- inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship
- inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring etc. as this is not encouraged at Stocks Green School.

Communication (including the use of technology/mobile phones)

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new and emerging technologies, pupils need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. E-safety risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself.

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, following the school e-safety policy and working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

Staff should not request or respond to any personal information from children or parents other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children or parents for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web based identities. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their manager. The child/parent should be firmly and politely informed that this is not acceptable.

In the event of pupils reported as using their own mobile phones inappropriately , sexting etc. this must be reported to the school DSL's immediately. If staff see evidence of this on pupil phones or ipads etc , they **must not** forward this in any way to either the DSL's or the police . If at school, the mobile phone/equipment must be confiscated and handed to the police who will investigate.

Staff should:

- use only equipment and Internet services provided by the school when in school
- follow the policy for e-safety
- ensure that their use of technologies does not bring the school into disrepute
- not access social networking sites for personal use during classes.
- always act in the best interests of the school and not disclose personal data or information about any individual, including staff members, children and young people.
- not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils/parents outside of the purposes of their work. Staff members must not 'friend' pupils or parents on social networking websites eg. Facebook.
- **not use their mobile phones in school during their contact time with pupils. Mobile phones should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present .**
- **ensure mobile phones are not to be used in class as timers, cameras etc.**
- **ensure mobile phones are not be left on desks in classrooms where pupils may see personal information, photographs etc.**

Disciplinary action will be taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made against any individual at the school .

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.

Staff should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described
- never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent
- always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- never indulge in horseplay or fun fights
- always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate
- always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil
- establish the preferences of pupils
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact
- always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- report and record situations which may give rise to concern
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the manager and recorded. Where appropriate, the manager should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO).

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Staff need to be aware that the child may associate physical contact with such experiences. They also should recognise that these pupils may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively and help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Pupils with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Other activities that require physical contact

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.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the pupil. Contact should be relevant to their age / understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Staff should:

- treat pupils with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- seek consent of parents where a pupil is unable to give this e.g. because of a disability
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact
- conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- be aware of gender, cultural and religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact

Intimate / personal care

The school has a personal care /nappy changing policy.

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, wherever possible, 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.

Staff should:

- **Protect their own integrity at all times**
- adhere to their organisation's intimate and personal care and nappy changing policies
- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins
- consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary
- record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- where there are changing rooms – such as at the swimming pool, announce their intention of entering
- always consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room where their needs require this

Staff should not:

- change or go to the toilet themselves in the presence or sight of pupils
- shower with pupils
- assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the pupil is able to undertake independently

Behaviour management

Corporal punishment and smacking is unlawful in all schools and EYFS settings.

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable.

Where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults should follow the school's behaviour policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Where a pupil has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a behaviour and positive handling plan, including assessment of risk, will be drawn up and agreed by all parties.

Staff should:

- not use force as a form of punishment
- try to defuse situations before they escalate e.g. by distraction

- keep parents informed of any sanctions or behaviour management techniques used
- be mindful of and sensitive to factors both inside and outside of the school which may impact on a pupil's behaviour
- follow the establishment's behaviour management policy
- behave as a role model
- avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation
- be aware of the legislation and potential risks associated with the use of isolation and seclusion
- comply with legislation and guidance in relation to human rights and restriction of liberty.

Supervision of classes

To ensure pupil safety at all times, classes **MUST NOT** be left unsupervised at any time. Teachers must ensure there is an adult present if they have to leave the classroom.

The use of control and physical intervention

Teaching Staff and TA's will be trained in manual handling.

The law and guidance for schools states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

Staff should:

- adhere to the school physical intervention policy
- always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible
- where physical intervention is necessary, only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed

Staff should not

- use physical intervention as a form of punishment

Great care must be exercised in order that adults do not physically intervene in a manner which could be considered unlawful.

In all cases where physical intervention has taken place, the staff involved must record the incident and subsequent actions and report these to the headteacher and the child's parents.

Sexual conduct

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable.

This means that staff should:

- not have any form of sexual contact with pupils
- avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, inappropriate.
- Avoid any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive, provocative or give rise to speculation e.g. verbal comments, letters, notes, by email or on social media, phone calls, texts, physical contact
- not make sexual remarks/innuendo to or about a pupil
- not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of pupils other than within agreed curriculum content or as part of their recognised job role

One to one situations

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

This means that staff should:

- work in a public area of the school and ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved

Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the pupil and their parents/carers.

Home Visits

All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school . There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation where a home visit may be necessary.

Staff should:

- agree the purpose for any home visit with the headteacher and always take another member of staff with you – visits should not be made alone.
- avoid unannounced visits wherever possible
- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure
- ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with the headteacher

Transporting pupils

Members of staff are not encouraged to use their vehicles to transport pupils, except in an emergency. They MUST have insurance cover for business purposes. Parents transporting pupils other than their own on school business, must also have appropriate insurance which has been shown to the school office staff in advance of the journey.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats for younger children.

Staff should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both the headteacher and the child's parent(s). Whenever possible permission should be sought from the pupils parents beforehand.

Educational visits

The school Health and Safety policy should be read in connection with this section for policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities.

Staff should:

- adhere to the schools educational visits guidance
- always have another adult present on visits, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff
- undertake pre-visits and risk assessments
- have parental consent to the activity

- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times
- never share beds with a child/pupil
- never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Head teacher, parents and pupils
- refer to local and national guidance for Educational visits.

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Where out of school or setting activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings should pay careful attention to ensuring there is a safe staff/child ratio and suitable gender mix of staff.

Photography, videos and other images

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Under no circumstances should staff use their personal equipment or mobile phones to take images of pupils at or on behalf of the school or setting.

Staff should:

- adhere to the school's policy on photographic images
- only publish images of pupils where they and their parent/carer have given explicit written consent to do so
- only take images where the pupil is happy for them to do so
- only retain images when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so
- store images in an appropriate secure place in the school
- ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose
- be able to justify images of pupils in their possession
- avoid making images in one to one situations

Staff should not:

- take images of pupils for their personal use
- display or distribute images of pupils unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so (and, where appropriate, consent from the child)
- take images of children using personal equipment
- take images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress
- take images of children which could be considered as indecent or sexual

Exposure to inappropriate images

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images.

Staff should keep their passwords confidential and not allow unauthorised access to equipment. In the event of any indecent images of children or unsuitable material being discovered on a device, the equipment should not be tampered with in any way. It should be secured and isolated from the network, and the LADO contacted without delay. Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves as this may lead to a contamination of evidence and a possibility they will be at risk of prosecution themselves.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. The school has a Whistleblowing Policy that meets the

terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Staff who use whistle blowing procedures will have their employment rights protected.

Staff should recognise their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies and that to not do so may result in charges of serious neglect on their part where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Sharing concerns and recording incidents

All staff should be aware of the school's safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers.

All staff are trained in safeguarding every 2 years.

In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the Head teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead – Pauline Crowhurst or Claire Rowley as appropriate.

Members of staff should feel able to discuss any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with or behaviour towards pupils, so that appropriate support can be provided and/or action can be taken.

In order to safeguard and protect pupils and colleagues, where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children, they should immediately report this to the Head teacher in line with the setting's