

Queen Mary Avenue Infant and Nursery School



Staff Code of Conduct September 2022

Review Frequency: Annually

Approved by: Governing body

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VISION AND VALUES



Respect – Hard Work – Pride – Kindness – Honesty

Dream Big

We believe that everyone can succeed and achieve their dreams.

Shine Bright

We value and nurture each child's unique talents so that they can 'shine bright'.

Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

At Queen Mary Infant and Nursery School we believe in creating a whole school culture that is safe and inclusive. Our aims underpin the school culture: to develop a happy, friendly and secure atmosphere and to encourage a caring, respectful and trusting relationship between all children and adults.

School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards for all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside of working hours.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

Legislation and guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we have a staff code of conduct, which cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

Health and Safety

Staff will:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work (things they do or do not do).
- Not interfere with, misuse or wilfully damage anything provided in the interests of health and safety.
- Follow all controls identified within risk assessments, safe systems of work or outlined within health and safety training (including the use of any personal protective equipment provided).
- Report any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences experienced or witnessed during the course of their duties.
- Inform their manager (or the appropriate authority) about any personal difficulties that might affect their ability to do their job competently and safely (including any personal demands, lack of control or support or any issues with their working relationships, role or impacts of change).
- Report any medical conditions that may affect their work activities or abilities to carry out their roles.
- Not report nor endeavour to report for work whilst under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Not carry out their duties in the workplace whilst under the influence of alcohol and/or misuse of drugs.

Note: Where an employee is taking prescribed drugs which may have an impact on their ability to undertake their regular duties safely, they must report this to their Line Manager immediately

Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available as a paper copy in the staff room and as an electronic copy on the school network. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available as a paper copy in the staff room and as an electronic copy on the school network.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff's health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of governors.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see in to the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy and follow the acceptable use policy when using social media.

Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not share personal details such as mobile phone number or personal email address with pupils or parents. Nor will they use personal texts, blog sites or social networks (other than the school Facebook or Instagram account), for communicating with pupils or parents. A school communication system is in place to contact parents if required.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

For more details please refer to acceptable use agreement.

Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £30 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

Dress code

A person's dress and appearance are a matter of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff members are role models to the children and they should therefore set a good example for the pupils by dressing in a professional, appropriate manner. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

For health and safety reasons, open toe shoes should not be worn by dining supervisors or kitchen staff. Staff working with food must comply with hygiene rules; in the kitchen hair must be covered by a net and a hat worn. Staff should also wear an apron or overall (these will be provided by the school). Staff working in the dining hall at lunchtime must wear a clean apron every day (these will be provided by the school).

Staff are requested not to wear jeans other than on non-uniform days. On the days when teaching PE, appropriate clothing and trainers should be worn, staff **MUST** always wear trainers when teaching P.E.

Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed.

Our governing body will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Online safety
- Whistle-blowing
- Behaviour

Please sign and date the below and return to the School Business Manager.

Employee Name:

Employee Signature:

Date: