

Code of Conduct Information Guide

Highfield Community Primary School Code of Conduct 2022-23



This guidance is designed to give clear instruction on the standards of conduct all school staff are expected to observe

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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 their pupils.

1. Introduction

At Highfield Community Primary School we pride ourselves in ensuring that we all adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct. As a member of our school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of our school, whether inside or outside of working hours. This guide is intended to provide you with a framework that provides clarity regarding your professional conduct. Each year, staff are required to sign to say they have read, understood and agree to follow the contents of the Code of Conduct and the policies which serve to safeguard children and young people.

2. Our

You may want to insert your school vision here

Our Responsibilities

Governing Body	Head Teacher	Staff
Ensure that the Headteacher and staff have implemented and are adhering to professional standards including all statutory policies and procedures. The GB may become involved if standards are breached.	Ensures that staff are aware of and are following professional standards. The HT will become involved when there are concerns that staff have breached standards.	Ensure they maintain professional standards within the school by following policies and the Code of Conduct. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Staff must immediately report any concerns.

Staff members are in a unique position of influence and are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following principles define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct within and outside the school setting:

- ✓ ensuring the welfare of every child is paramount, having regard to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions regardless of culture, religious belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation, racial origin and language.
- ✓ treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to your professional position.
- ✓ showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others; not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

- ✓ ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- ✓ staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- ✓ staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- ✓ staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- ✓ staff should discuss and / or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
- ✓ staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented / malicious allegations by children are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- ✓ staff should be aware of and understand the statutory frameworks in which they must act, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, Guidance for Safer Working Practice, the school / college child protection/safeguarding policy, arrangements for managing allegations and concerns against staff, staff behaviour policy, whistleblowing procedure and their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures.
- ✓ 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).
- ✓ teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part One): 'The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.'

3. Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

We endorse the [7 principles of public life](#) which apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in:

- the civil service
- local government
- the police
- the courts and probation services
- non-departmental public bodies
- health, **education**, social and care services

(and all those in other sectors that deliver public services).

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

For further information, visit www.gov.uk

4. Position of trust / setting an example

Relationships

It is essential that staff maintain wholly professional standards, ensuring they avoid any conduct which may be construed as a potential 'Breach of Trust'. A breach of trust occurs when the boundaries of the relationship between a professional and a child or young person, are broken due to inappropriate behaviour by the professional. Such conduct is classed as an abuse of power.

Professional boundaries must be clear from the outset. Staff should remain professional with pupils and should not share personal information with them, including address, phone number

etc. Staff must not make inappropriate comments, have inappropriate conversations or use offensive language. All effort should be made to avoid misinterpretation.

Sexual Contact / Relationships with Students

Members of staff **MUST NOT** engage in a sexual relationship or any sexual contact with pupils. It would be considered to be a breach of trust to develop a sexual / intimate relationship with a pupil under the age of 18. Any sexual activity with a child / under-16 could lead to prosecution and / or disciplinary action. Sexual activity can include non-contact activities such as watching inappropriate material and sending text messages which could be deemed as grooming.

Physical touch / contact

Only make contact with a student in a way that is appropriate within your professional role. Be aware not all children will feel comfortable being touched. The physical contact should be for the minimum amount of time and should never happen when you are alone with the child. Wherever possible, inform the child of your intentions and ask for their consent. Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender. Work within health and safety regulations.

Remain visible

Avoid being alone with a student behind a closed, windowless door. Within your work space keep windows clear, do not cover with displays. If working 1:1 with a student, ensure you have permission to do so and make colleagues aware of your location and the name of the student you are supporting. If you feel a child is becoming too familiar or infatuated, then report this immediately to your line manager.

Intimate care / Personal care

This will only be conducted by designated, trained staff who must follow the school policy / procedures. A member of staff substituting for an absent colleague, must be supervised at all times by an appropriately trained colleague.

5. Safeguarding pupils

Sharing concerns

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families / carers has a role to play in safeguarding children from harm, this includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, extremism and radicalisation. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred.

- ✓ staff should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- ✓ staff are required to keep up to date with safeguarding issues by reading the school's safeguarding related policies and DfE guidance as instructed by your Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- ✓ staff must report safeguarding concerns about a child to a DSL / DDSL, ensuring a written record is completed.
- ✓ staff must attend / undertake regular training on safeguarding related matters.

(For further information refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

Actions should be warranted, proportionate, safe and in line with school procedures. If you feel you have compromised yourself, immediately share your concerns with a manager (Headteacher / DSL). Record your concerns including actions, discussions, incidents, threats and misunderstandings.

If you feel the conduct of an adult colleague is inappropriate, it is expected that staff will follow the school's policy and procedures for reporting concerns (Allegations / Low-level concerns policies / Whistleblowing policy). Staff must take responsibility for recording and passing on the incident to the appropriate person (Headteacher / DSL).

(For further information, refer to the Low level concerns policy and Whistleblowing policy).

Recording Incidents

Record keeping is an important aspect of role. Recording is central to all we do whether recording communications, behaviour, attendance, Special Educational Needs or cause for concerns. It is imperative that you record correctly.

Recording checklist:

- ✓ time & date of incident is recorded.
- ✓ signed after every entry (print name).

- ✓ hand written records are legible (make sense) and black / blue permanent ink is used.
- ✓ errors are scored through with a single line, are dated and signed, and remain legible.
- ✓ information is clear and understandable to others.
- ✓ include full names in the record to avoid any confusion.
- ✓ child focussed.
- ✓ adhere to the 'clear desk policy' (do not leave documents in view of others).
- ✓ if working on a computer, ensure the screen is protected from the view of others.

Recording information:

- ✓ details are factual, accurate and do not include opinion, jargon, abbreviations (unless you have stated the meaning, full term or as a key in the record).
- ✓ actions and agreed interventions.
- ✓ information from any 3rd party and observations from potential witnesses.
- ✓ the use of a body map to illustrate **visible** marks / injuries (do not examine the child).
- ✓ the child's own words - what they said and questions you asked.
- ✓ where applicable, a risk assessment (any risks clearly stated).
- ✓ a clear plan, review process and agreed outcome of interventions.
- ✓ records are chronological, with the most recent entries being on top.
- ✓ where applicable, the service user / professional name is evident.
- ✓ all reports are signed by the relevant professional to prove that they have been read / marked as read on CPOMS.

(For further information, refer to the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy).

First Aid

First Aid should be administered and logged by a trained first aider. Management of incidents, including the administration of medication, must follow the school policy / procedures. All relevant documents and consent must be recorded and held securely. If unsure seek support on this matter.

(For further information, refer to the First Aid policy).

Transporting Students

In the course of your duties it may be appropriate for you to travel alone with a pupil in a vehicle. Follow the school policy / procedures, always seek approval in advance, get consent from the child's parent / carer. If travelling alone with a pupil, ensure the child sits in the back seat, and they wear a seatbelt. Children under 12 must have an appropriate child car seat unless they are over 135cm tall. Seek advice about appropriate car seats before making a journey. You must ensure you have a driving licence, tax, MOT and insurance, including business use.

Trips and outings

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils off-site and should ensure there is at least one other adult present. Staff must ensure recommended staff / child ratios are adhered to. All relevant documentation must be completed in advance including the risk assessment, EV forms and parental permission. Staff are responsible for the child(ren) until either they are collected by parent / carer or other arrangements are activated (e.g. child making their own way home after the event with pre-arranged parental consent).

On overnight trips, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Staff should not share a room or bed with a child. Seek advice from the Head Teacher if you are not clear on the correct procedures. Ensure you have access to 24-hour contact with a DSL / senior member of staff.

6. Behaviour management

All staff are expected to set high expectations that motivate and challenge poor behaviour by following the school behaviour management policy. This will be evidenced by staff:

- ✓ having clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and taking responsibility for promoting good and appropriate behaviour both in classrooms and around the school.
- ✓ having high expectations of behaviour, and establishing a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly.
- ✓ managing classes / groups effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them.
- ✓ maintaining good relationships with pupils, exercising appropriate authority, and acting decisively when necessary.

(DfE Teachers' Standards)

Remember to:

- ✓ record all relevant information using the school system at the earliest opportunity.
- ✓ inform parents of any sanctions or techniques used.

Behaviour positive handling

Where a child displays difficult or challenging behaviour you must follow the school's Behaviour policy and Physical intervention policy. Physical intervention can be used to prevent injury to a child, other children, adult or serious damage to property.

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) should only be used as a last resort when all de-escalation / behaviour strategies have been exhausted. While restraint is permissible, it

should be used for the shortest time possible and only when there is no other alternative to help children and staff to stay safe. It should never be used routinely and must be used proportionately. Always seek help if you are in a situation which warrants this type of action.

Unwarranted and disproportionate physical force can result in a criminal offence. All incidents should be immediately documented and shared with the designated member of SLT.

1:1 Situations

Ensure you understand the child's context, circumstances and concerns prior to a pre-arranged 1-1 meeting. Be aware that there is a higher risk of allegations in 1-1 situations, therefore take sensible precautions:

- ✓ be aware of any risks associated with the pupil (is there a Risk Assessment in place?) ensure wherever possible that there is visual access including an open door if feasible.
- ✓ do not cover windows and glass panes in doors.
- ✓ be aware of your proximity / position / body language.
- ✓ inform an appropriate person that you intend to meet (include location) with a student.
- ✓ consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil(s) involved.
- ✓ avoid a 1:1 situation when pupils are angry, infatuated or over-familiar.
- ✓ immediately report any concerns to a relevant member of staff.
- ✓ be open and transparent.

7. Confidentiality

Information sharing

In some cases, you may need to share highly sensitive information.

- ✓ be clear about when and what information can be shared ensuring you have a viable reason to do so and follow the relevant guidance.
- ✓ manage information in a discreet and confidential manner.
- ✓ when a child shares personal information, **never** promise confidentiality.
- ✓ confidential information must not be shared with colleagues (unless directed to do so).
- ✓ confidential information must not be shared or discussed outside of the workplace.
- ✓ information must not be used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others.
- ✓ if unsure always ask for guidance from a line manager / senior leader / HR team.

Seven Golden Rules to Information Sharing

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), **Data Protection Act**

2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2. **Be open and honest** with the individual (and / or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice** from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Where possible, share information with consent**, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. **Consider safety and well-being**: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure**: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

(For further information, refer to DfE Guidance on information sharing, 2018).

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

GDPR is everyone's responsibility and the law requires that everyone understands what data protection means for their role. We all want a safe and secure environment to work in so we have to ensure we protect all personal data. Personal data is any data that can be used to identify a person, this could be a name, DOB, reference number or anything that could directly or indirectly identify an individual. We need to know where data is and that it is stored securely. Simple steps we can take include:

- ✓ use strong passwords.
- ✓ never share passwords.

- ✓ never send personal details in emails unless they are encrypted.
- ✓ never leave your computer or device unlocked.
- ✓ make sure no one can see your screen if it has personal data on it.
- ✓ keep antivirus software up to date.
- ✓ any data used out of school, with the permission of the headteacher, must be protected at all times.
- ✓ memory cards, USB sticks or any other storage devices must be encrypted and all hardware fully protected.
- ✓ personal data can be held in a range of places, use three simple rules to protect it: cover it, lock it, shred it.
- ✓ if you have any concerns regarding data protection speak to your data protection lead / HR lead in school.

(For further information, refer to the policies relating to GDPR).

8. Honesty and integrity

Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work.

Personal matters

Staff will:

- ✓ inform the headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- ✓ inform the headteacher if they are subject to an assessment by Children's Social Care.
- ✓ ensure all the information given about their qualifications and professional experience is accurate.
- ✓ apply transparency when handling and claiming money.
- ✓ carefully maintain school property and facilities.
- ✓ ensure they are fit for work i.e. not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst undertaking their professional duties.
- ✓ inform the headteacher about medication that may affect their ability to be safe in the workplace.
- ✓ ensure all personal tasks (including telephone calls and emails) are conducted outside working hours.
- ✓ voluntarily share information with the headteacher if they are aware of a potential safeguarding matter / issue which might compromise their ability to keep children safe.

KCSIE 2022 indicates that schools and colleges should ensure they, "Create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for

example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and / or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.”

9. Presentation

Dress and appearance

Staff must:

- ✓ dress professionally at all times following the school dress code.
- ✓ avoid clothing that may be viewed as offensive, revealing, sexually provocative or displaying contentious slogans.
- ✓ footwear must be fit for purpose and not impair the ability to carry out your role safely.
- ✓ clothing must be smart and appropriate to ensure professional modesty is maintained.
- ✓ enclosed footwear must be worn for subjects where there is an increased risk of injury.
- ✓ Sport / PE staff must change out of sportswear when teaching classroom-based lessons.
- ✓ wearing specialist or protective clothing, if required, including high visual items, safety gloves, glasses, aprons, protective footwear etc.

10. Use of electronic technologies and personal communication devices

Use of devices / work mobiles

Staff must exercise caution when using communication technologies and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

- ✓ all staff should sign the Acceptable use of IT systems policy.
- ✓ only use school approved devices and systems (including email and school learning platform) for communication with pupils and parents / carers.
- ✓ do not verbalise or write messages that could be construed as misconduct. Such use may lead to disciplinary and / or criminal investigation.
- ✓ during school trips staff can use a personal mobile phone to make work related called if needed.

Internet usage policy

All staff should sign the Acceptable use of IT systems policy. All websites accessed must be appropriate / safe. Laptops / devices must not be shared with anyone else, including pupils. Misuse could lead to an investigation either through an internal procedure or by the police.

(For further information, refer to the Acceptable use of IT systems policy).

Social Networking

When accessing social networking platforms, be aware this is in the public domain and can be viewed by members of the public.

- ✓ you are strongly advised to keep your accounts private.
- ✓ do not accept students or parents as friends.
- ✓ pay attention to who you accept as friends and what your friends are posting. This does not mean you cannot have an account or comment but be careful that you are not posting comments that reflect negatively on you or the school.
- ✓ assess whether group chats are necessary and helpful – if the content is derogatory towards your place of work, including employees, leave the group as it could be used as evidence of misconduct.
- ✓ in line with in-school policies (low-level concerns / allegations / whistleblowing), this information should be reported to a key person in school.
- ✓ staff have a responsibility to represent the school positively at all times.
- ✓ staff must not use social media with pupils / former pupils who are still of statutory school age.

Photographs, Videos and Images

Staff must:

- ✓ follow school policy / procedures.
- ✓ provide a valid reason to take a photo / video of a child.
- ✓ gain parental consent.
- ✓ avoid making images in a one to one situation.
- ✓ take images on school approved devices (following the correct protocol).
- ✓ save image / video on school IT hardware / computers.
- ✓ ensure the child understands why the image is being taken.
- ✓ ensure the process does not cause distress to the child.
- ✓ report any concerns about intrusive or inappropriate issues found.

11.School Security

ID Badges: staff should wear their ID badge at all times. Outreach staff should ensure they are wearing their ID badge whilst conducting out of school working such as home visits.

Fobs / Keys: do not give fobs or keys to students. If you misplace your fobs / keys, you must inform your line manager / HR as this may be a security risk.

Other adults on site: adults on site must sign in and wear a visible visitor's badge; those without an enhanced DBS must be supervised at all times.

Concerns: any concerns that suggest the schools' security could be breached, should be immediately shared. If there is immediate danger, then school staff should contact the police.

12.Conduct outside work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work that could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school and the reputation of staff. Such conduct could lead to disciplinary action. This includes:

- ✓ negative comments about the school on social media.
- ✓ conduct of a violent nature.
- ✓ possession of / use of illegal drugs.
- ✓ sexual misconduct.

Social Contact

It is essential that staff maintain wholly professional standards, ensuring they avoid any conduct which may be construed as a potential 'Breach of Trust' (see section 4).

It is expected that staff will adhere to the following guidance:

- ✓ do not invite a child from this school into your home.
- ✓ do not seek out of school contact with a pupil or their family (including holiday periods).
- ✓ do not drink with under 18s from this school as this could be classed as condoning underage drinking.
- ✓ only attend a social event by arrangement with current students aged 18+.
- ✓ if you are placed in this situation unintentionally you must behave in a professional manner and leave if the situation could be perceived as unprofessional.
- ✓ best practice is to inform the Headteacher at a suitable time.
- ✓ where relevant, staff who live in the catchment area or have children attending this school can seek guidance from the Headteacher.

Staff may take on additional work outside of their school role such as examination marking, private tutoring or working at summer schemes. Employees' off-duty hours are their private concern as long as they do not:

- ✓ compromise their position at the school.
- ✓ create a conflict of interest by carrying out the work.
- ✓ carry out any work that may jeopardise the reputation of the school or compromise their suitability to work within the school.

13. Personal interests

Staff must declare to the Headteacher any personal and or financial interests that they have that may conflict with the school's interest.

Summary: Protect yourself

Protect yourself by following these simple steps...

Responsibility: take responsibility for your own actions.

Act: act in the best interests of the child.

Avoid: avoid conduct that would lead anyone to question motivations and intentions.

Seek advice: take advice from appropriate persons.

Discuss: discuss any misunderstanding with senior management.

Identify risk: identify and report any areas of risk. Try and remove yourself from the risk.

Record: record your concerns in writing.

Report: pass on your concerns immediately.

Union support: all teaching and non-teaching staff are advised and encouraged to be part of a union as they may need to seek advice and support.

Stay Safe by following our code of conduct

We want you to have the confidence to do your job without worrying. If you ever feel unsure about the right course of action, speak to your line manager or the Headteacher.

Appendix 1

CPOMS Login Rules:

If using the CPOMS app on a smart mobile phone:

- ✓ login prior to the children arriving or after the children have left then lock the phone away.
- ✓ you can still add logs without the app during the school day.

If using the merilock key to login:

- ✓ do not leave your key in the computer after logging on.
- ✓ do not share your key with anyone else.
- ✓ if you misplace your key inform the CPOMS admin user immediately.

Consider confidentiality:

- ✓ if you feel your password has been compromised, then reset your password and inform your line manager.
- ✓ when reading a notification or adding a new log, be aware of the position of your computer and others who may be able to see the information.
- ✓ if printing logs, ensure these are stored securely. Do not leave any printed logs in view of others / on desks etc.
- ✓ printed child protection and safeguarding records should be held in a locked filing cabinet by the DSL.
- ✓ CPOMS produces an audit of the times / dates when staff login, add and view logs. We advise that staff do not login at home or outside of their contractual working hours.

Appendix 2

Key contacts: add relevant staff here

Head Teacher / DSL	Deputy Head(s)
Claire Spencer clairespencer@hcps.org.uk	Deborah Doherty deborahdoherty@hcps.org.uk
Deputy DSL(s)	Senior Leadership Team
Deborah Doherty deborahdoherty@hcps.org.uk	Claire Spencer and Deborah Doherty
HR Representatives	Data Protection Lead
	Claire Spencer and Sandra Baker
Union Representative/s	Chair of Governors
Sally Castling	Ian Clydesdale
Other	
Louise Liddle Safeguarding Governor	